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THE

MUSIC OF THE CHURCH,

IN FOUR PARTS;

CONTAINING

A GENERAL HISTORY OF MUSIC;

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF

HEBREW MUSIC, AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FITNESS OF INSTRUMENTS, HARMONY, FUGUING, ANTHEMS, CHANTS, CHOIRS, ETC., IN

DIVINE WORSHIP;

AND

NOTICES, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL, OF THE MOST POPULAR HYMNIC AUTHORS.

BY THOMAS HIRST.

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PREFACE.

It is so fashionable for a book to have a preface, that a publication sent into the world without one, looks rather naked, and seems devoid of a necessary recommendation to public favour. In those cases where a reader has patience to go through a lengthy preface, the author has an opportunity of suggesting many considerations, which may dispose him to a more favourable perusal of the work.

The author generally considers his subject important, if not the most important, and beset with difficulties of corresponding magnitude. Apologies for numerous defects are usually made with great generosity; but so much under cover of strong points of excellence, clearly expressed, as to preserve harmless his reputation. And who can presume to find fault with such a procedure? It is a natural issue of the temperament and feelings of authorship, and is often marked with great sincerity. Nor is it unwelcomed by the reader; as on the whole it serves as a directory, which renders more pleasant and profitable his travel through the work.

But from this course in regard to the present publication, with a slight reserve, I shall dissent, for reasons not worth particularizing to the reader.

In my intercourse with singers, and Christians in eneral, both lay and ministerial, of the principal reli- ious denominations, I have heard many different pinions expressed; and have witnessed many practices rafted upon those opinions, on the use of instruments, armony, fuguing, choirs, and all that is discussed in he third part of this work. I thought if a rule could e formed from a general view of the case, with refer- nce to the interests of religion, so as to correct extrava- ance on the one hand, and weaken prejudice on the ther, it would be no contemptible achievement. It is ue such information as was desired, was before the ublic. But, though every commentator on scripture, nd writers on practical divinity, with numerous miscel- aneous authors, have touched upon the subject as ccasion offered, yet something in a more methodical nd concentrated form was required. Hence then my ttempt, in the *third* part of this work. It then ppeared that a sketch of the general history of Music, ith a particular view of that of the Hebrews, would e proper accompaniments, and add to the value of the ndertaking. Hence arose the *first* and *second* parts. ut any one knows the intimate connexion subsisting etween metrical compositions, such as psalms and ymns, and the music to which they are put. What ien was more natural, than taking a biographical ance at some of the most popular hymnologists, and passing notice of their effusions, as a concluding ortion of the work?

Such then was the leading idea, and such its develop- ent in the publication before the reader. As to the

value, either of the design, or its execution, it is not for me to speak. It would be an act of unseemly vanity in me, to expect in the attempt, unexceptional approval. Sure I am, that no character, however adorned by piety, intellect, office, or experience, is sufficient security against opposing opinions, on a subject, of all others, like the one now brought under the notice of the reader.

It will be only necessary to add, that "THE MUSIC OF THE CHURCH," was not *especially* written for *accomplished professors* in the science. Such an intention would have been utterly weak, in a work taking so wide a range of view, in so small a number of pages. Yet, I confess I am not without hope, that, from the *plan* of the work, and as a book of reference, it will be acceptable even to readers of this class. But it is to those persons of more limited reading and information on the subject of music, both lay and clerical, that the following pages will be mainly serviceable. If in either, or in any case, the reader will be pleased, and directed in the right use of music, the great end of the book will be answered.

THOMAS HIRST.

WATNALL, NOV. 11, 1841.

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THERE are few persons but what take pleasure in tracing out the origin and progress of a favourite study. And this feeling is so general, that it is not confined to literary, mechanical, or scientific pursuits, but it glows and expands in the breast of the least tutored of the "humble poor," as his enquiries cling to all that is interesting in the obscure village, or business, with which he is immediately connected.

And no person can ascend the stream of time with a design to inform himself on any particular

subject, without at the same time having his views involuntarily enlarged, and making, at a cheap rate, the most valuable acquisitions. Indeed, though we may partially fail in the main object of our search, so numerous are the circumstances and tracks of thought that branch out from the main course of our study, and so filled with instructive lessons, that we shall be more and more reconciled to our disappointment, and encouraged again and again, with increased facilities to extend the boundaries of our knowledge.

To the person whose soul is imbued with a love of music in any of its forms, these preliminary observations are unnecessary to stimulate him to travel with the author in endeavouring to point out its origin, to survey its developements, to admire its contributions to the sum of human happiness; and to deplore its abuse, either by its avowed enemies, or by its too sanguine and inconsiderate friends. Yet, to tardy and less interested readers, some of whom may take up this little book, such considerations may tend to reconcile them to disappointment, and give edge to inquiry, by opening out to them new avenues of thought.

Numerous have been the conjectures put forth by writers on the *origin* of music, both as regards the *form* it first assumed, and as to when it was reduced to a tolerably regular system; and also as to the attention paid to it, and the influence it exerted in the early ages of the world. It is very

easy to see the propriety of many things after they have been brought into useful and pleasurable practice, and to wonder at the simplicity of the world in not having discovered them sooner. But passing over the lapse of ages to the period ere the hand of science had framed a system, as a body in which the spirit of music might dwell, where it might be studied to advantage, it seems difficult to view man in any part of his history, however remote, or however rude, without connecting with him some taste for music, and the practice of *vocal melody.*

Pleasure must be considered one of the main attractions to human exertions; and to bring it within our grasp, every power, both of body and mind, will, for its attainment, be laid under requisition. The senses mutually aid each other in furnishing impressions to the mind, or rather to the brain; and the mind, acting under laws deeply mysterious, governing at once the material and the immaterial world, derives pleasure from its various modifications. "No art or science that ever was invented by the ingenuity of man exerts so powerful an influence over body and mind as music. It is the galvanised fluid of harmony which vibrates on the ear, electrifies the soul, thrills through every nerve of the body. The stimulus of music is of a very subtil and diffusible nature, and the excitement it produces in the nervous system is of a peculiar character, by no

systematic form is now impossible for us to say. In our search for this information, we have to abandon in despair all the tracks which profane history opens to us; and when left to the only resource of sacred scriptures, we shall not find much more aid in our pursuit. The Bible makes but very scanty reference to vocal music, for many hundred years of its history. It is true *instrumental* music is mentioned early in scripture, which by the way, is another presumptive proof of the antiquity of *vocal* music, as in the nature and common course of things, vocal must have preceded instrumental music.

No doubt many, whose hearts are tuned to the songs of Zion, have often wondered what were the character of the mental faculties and sensitive powers, and especially the *vocal qualifications* of our first parents before the fall. An answer to this, we might frame upon a consideration of the fearful alteration which has taken place in those respects, fixing upon the antithesis of his *present* character and condition. But we are expressly told by Divine inspiration, that he was originally made in "righteousness and true holiness;" but by the fall this moral impress of his Maker's image became replaced by a "carnal mind," and a heart at "enmity with God." His intellectual character is also greatly impaired. His understanding, perception, and memory, have become dark, hard, doubtful, and contracted, and

an equally withering curse has fallen upon his physical powers. He is doomed to "earn his bread by the sweat of his brow," and diseases and dangers, with their attendants, pain and sorrow, are the certain preludes of that event so impressingly made prominent in the condition of his first estate, "The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die." Thus all our senses, as well as faculties, have suffered by the sin of our first parents, which "brought death into the world and all our woes." Even if they had not been more *constitutionally* perfect, they would never, had they not have sinned, have been injured by anything in the shape of affliction, accident, or decay. The organs of vision would at least have retained all the clearness and strength of youth; the ear would ever have been exquisitely alive to all the music of sound; and the voice tuned to a chaste imagination through the medium of an exquisitely correct ear, never being weakened by physical debility, or disease, would have poured forth its melodious strains at pleasure.

In confirmation of the above conjectural statements we may quote appropriately from an eminent naturalist, and accomplished theologian, one of whose productions has fallen under our notice, since writing the foregoing observations—he says: "To the slightest rational consideration, it must be evident, that the first human pair were created in the perfection of their bodily organs and mental

powers, and they were immediately endowed by their Creator with a full use of their organs and faculties, and with a competent measure of the habits thence resulting, that use and those habits which all subsequent human beings have had to acquire by the slow process of parental training and imitative acquisition. Had these qualifications not been thus infused into them or made intuitive at the very commencement of their being, they could not have preserved their own lives, nor rendered to their heavenly Sovereign any religious homage." And again: "The Deity was pleased to manifest himself to the newly formed and favourite creatures in ways of the most condescending goodness and wisdom; assuming, probably, a splendid human form, and communing with them in ways, and to an extent of the most wise and benevolent purposes, beyond what we can know."*

We might here introduce a number of theories which have at different times been put forth, each asking to be heard. This would, however, be detaining us too long, and leading us too far aside from the principal object of our inquiry. What we are now especially called to make prominent is, the *consistency* of theory and analogy; the claiming for those senses, organs, and faculties, rights and uses, which are asked for others under similar circumstances.

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* Dr. Pye Smith's Geology, p. 252—3.

Those persons who shrink from such a concession, must think Milton's description of the condition of our first parents, before the devil had destroyed the beauty of God's creation in this world, anything but correct. Music was made by him to contribute a large portion of happiness to the illustrious pair, before their degradation. And if that be considered but a mere imaginative description, having no foundation but in the poet's brain, a state altogether as chimerical and unlikely as that of the Brobdignagians or Lilliputians of Swift, then, by the same rule, all the other channels of pleasure through the senses, must be dried up. When Eve is preparing a repast for an angel visitant, she thus speaks of her resourses—

" Store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk,
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth
God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.

* * * * " Fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rined, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink, the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must."

And the enchanting scenery of Eden is further described thus:

"These glittering tents he passed, and now is come
Into the blissful fields, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odours, cassia, nard, and balm;
A wilderness of sweets! for nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin-fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above all rule, or art, enormous bliss!"

And in the midst of such delightful scenery, delicious food, and grateful odours, *music* diffused her enlivening charms. The following passages are apposite:

"Lowly they bowed, adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style: for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips in prose, or numerous verse,
More tunable than needed lute, or harp,
To add more sweetness."*

We have chosen to make pointed reference to Milton's Paradise Lost, because on that subject, among all human compositions, it stands alone in striking imagery, deep poetic feeling, and chaste reverential sublimity. Moreover, the conception of its general plan, and unfolding of its details, are founded upon, and governed by, the information furnished by the word of God; and where its brief, and somewhat scattered account of man's primeval

* Milton's Paradise Lost, Book v.

state leaves the poet at liberty to fill up the spaces by the beautiful creations of his own fertile imagination, they are such as harmonize with the spirit and letter of those parts of scripture that clearly, and pointedly relate to the subject.

If, then, we believe that the curse inflicted by God on man, when the latter broke over the just limits of his state, shed its mortalising and desolating influence over every sense, organ, and faculty of both mind and body, we have good reason to conclude that, before that direful event occurred, *music*, in its diversified capabilities of mood and style, flowed from human lips more sweet, cheering, and angelic, than has ever since been heard from mortal voice.

Numerous thoughts here present themselves, and wrapt, as it were, in the mournful and faint reverberations of the hushed music of that happy state, make feeling appeals in behalf of our art, whose "glory has departed." But they must be silenced until the arrival of a subsequent part of this work, when it is hoped they may be heard with that candour to which they are justly entitled.

In marking out the progress of music as we descend the stream of time, we shall now be reminded of the existence of *instruments*, to aid the human voice in extending the power, and variety of musical sound. Here also, however, much doubt encumbers the subject, the dark shadows of antiquity preventing us from taking

anything like an ample and discriminating view of *instrumental music*, in connexion with system, through many of the first ages of the world. As believers in the scriptural account of the deluge, we cannot receive as genuine, any traditional or documentary information, in whatever form, as to what took place before the flood, but what is derived from Bible history. For all the remaining knowledge of the antediluvian world at the time of the flood, was compressed and epitomised to the scanty dimensions of the ark. Of course all nations since, in tracing up their history, must at once stop at the flood. And if we would make ourselves at all acquainted with the transactions of the world beyond, we must pass over, with Noah and his family, in the ark.*

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* It may be right to observe, for the benefit of some of my readers, that on the facts supported in the paragraph to which this note refers, there is much difference of opinion amongst learned men. The points in dispute, in which scripture history is mainly concerned, are the accounts of the creation of the world, and the deluge. That opinion on these facts, and which is formed from the simple, and unaided reading of the scriptures, is, that the world was created about four thousand years before Christ, according to Usher, and Blair; and that man was formed immediately after;—that the deluge was universal, covering every particle of land on the surface of the globe; and that not one human being survived the awful visitation, but those that were within the ark. That reading of scripture, which is opposed to this opinion, is, that the world has existed, perhaps—millions of years; but that the first man was created about the time, supposed by the opposing party;

This event took place, according to Archbishop Usher, in the year of the world 1656, and 2348

—and that the flood was not universal, and was but to a very limited extent.

This theory, in varying forms, has for a length of time been supported by writers of distinction; chiefly, we believe, of those of the Italian and German school. But that which was once considered a fanciful speculation—the conjectures of daring genius—has of late years become invested with arguments, which on many minds extend and deepen the conviction of its truth. It is the increasing, and we might say, enthusiastic study of geology, which has led to this revolution of opinion. American, French, and writers of other nations, have joined the English in investigating the science in all its minutiæ and general bearings; and still the study is prosecuted with increasing avidity. Looking at the achievements of the few years just past, it will not be difficult to augur that a little advance in the future will make startling discoveries, and render plain many phenomena of the science.

The general impression hereby produced on the minds of geologists is, that the science *is at variance with revelation*; and that, relying on the truth of the science, revelation must give way, and with it the whole fabric of Christianity, and all that is vital in religious hope and feeling. It is easy to imagine that such a conclusion would speedily be adopted by minds disposed to entertain infidel opinions, and who treat with contempt the great verities of the Bible.

But amongst the most eminent geologists are to be found some of our most valuable theologians, whose regard for the Word of God is scrupulous, conscientious, and open; who take the torch of divine truth to guide their scientific discoveries, and think it not right to penetrate those caverns where its fire will not burn, and its light cannot be seen. These writers, while on the one hand they have given encouragement to a free investigation of the works of God, and on

years before Christ. Confining ourselves, then, entirely to the scriptural account for our informa-

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the other have been anxious to uphold the authority of the Word of God, have endeavoured to give that illustration to their respective character, as to shew that they both spring from the same all forming hand.

Perhaps no work has more fully developed this intention than that of Dr. Pye Smith, "On the Relation between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science," which was delivered as the sixth series of the Congregational Lectures. It is a most elaborate production, and compresses within a comparatively small compass, a vast amount of information on the science; and shews that the Doctor had more scientific knowledge than had generally been given him credit for. But the great peculiarity of his work, and its avowed object, is to harmonize the science and the scriptures, by *his mode of expounding the latter*. Thus, for instance, in regard to the deluge: he shows by a great variety of considerations, imbued with much reason and truth,—which cannot here be given even in an epitomised form,—that the waters could not have covered every part of the land all over the globe. And he wishes it to be understood that this need not be maintained in the face of reason and propriety, from a squeamish and an unmeaning regard for the credit of the sacred scriptures, as being quite uncalled for, and likely to injure, rather than serve the cause of revealed truth.

He then considers the meaning of the Hebrew words in question, the idioms of the language, and the way in which similar language is employed on other occasions, supported by the criticisms of several eminent commentators. The scripture description of the flood runs thus: "The waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered."* To those who have studied the phraseology of scripture, there is no rule of

* Genesis vii. 19.

tion on *music*, we find about 1150 years preceding that period, a solitary passage on the subject, in

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interpretation more certain than this, that *universal terms* are often used to signiiy only *a very large* amount in number or quantity. We may cite a few instances, where it is evident the words used in the above passage have a restricted meaning.

"And the famine was upon all the face of the earth;—and all the earth came to Egypt, to buy corn from Joseph, for the famine was extreme in all the earth."* Yet it is self-evident that only these countries are meant, which lay within a practicable distance from Egypt. "The hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field;" but, a few days after, we find the devastation of the locusts thus described: "They did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left."† "This day will I begin to put the fear of thee, and the dread of thee upon the face of the nations under all the heavens;"‡ yet this declaration respects only the nations of Canaan and those lying upon its frontier, all being within a very small geographical district. "All the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom."§ This cannot be reasonably understood of any kind of resort but that of embassies and complimentary visits, from sovereigns and states within a tolerable distance The queen of Sheba was very likely one of the principal visitants. Our Lord himself condescended to use the style of the Jews in saying of her, that "The queen of the south came from the uttermost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon."‖ After quoting various other scriptures, Doctor Smith says, "From these instances of the scriptural idiom in the application of phraseology similar to that in the narrative concerning the flood, I humbly think that those terms do not oblige us to understand a literal universality, so that we are exonerated from some otherwise insuperable difficulties in natural history

* Gen. xli. 56, 57. † Exod. x. 5, 15. ‡ Deut. ii. 25.
§ 1 Kings x. 24. ‖ Matt. xii. 42.

Genesis iv. 21, where it is said, "Jubal was the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ."

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and geology. If so much of the earth was overflowed as was occupied by the human race, both the physical and the moral ends of that awful visitation were answered."*

The author examines the Mosaic account of the creation, as given in the first chapter of Genesis, with considerable ability and spirit, and with the same friendly aspect upon his geological creed:—the most difficult part of the scientific theologian's task, and fraught with overwhelming consequences. The author, from considering the process of stratification, the revolutions which have taken place in the positions and qualities of the layers of earth, in both land and sea; the time which must have been required for the effecting of such revolutions, and innumerable other facts and reasonings, which crowd thick in the vision of the geologist,—has a conviction of the certainty that the world must have existed an amazing length of time anterior to that fixed upon by popular opinion. Being also sure, "that truth is immutable, and that one truth can never contradict another; though different parts of its vast empire may and do lie far asunder, and the intermediate portions may be covered with more or less of obscurity, yet they are under the same sceptre, and it is of itself, and antecedently certain that the facts of nature, and the laws that govern them, are in perfect unison with every other part of the will of Him that made them." In the full belief of his ability to remove many of the existing discrepancies, he proceeds to examine the scripture account of the formation of the earth,—but which, of course, cannot here be conveniently pursued further. The work itself will amply repay perusal, by those persons who are desirous of seeing the bearing which geology has upon corresponding portions of divine revelation. The work is especially valuable also to persons of limited reading, as it presents the most striking, best authenticated, and latest

* Geology, page 307.

The verse following speaks of "Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron." From these passages we gather, first, that at this time there were at least two kinds of instruments, the *harp*, and the *organ*, the former supposed to be a *stringed*, and the latter a *wind* instrument. It is highly probable these two generic kinds might comprehend many others in different forms, the names of which the sacred historian, in his very brief account, did not think it important to give. This supposition is by no means beyond probability, when we consider the statement just made, that there were "artificers in brass and iron," which would at once furnish both the means and inducements thus to diversify their instruments. Instruments of *percussion* are not named, such as drums and tambarines; but such instruments, no doubt, were in use, for the principle, as well as materials of which they are made, would be as simple as those of the harp and organ.

Perhaps Tubal's profession is here given distinctively, and by contrast, as though he was the

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facts, discoveries, and reasonings on the science; in addition to the ingenious theories, and promiscuous observations of the author.

The declared, and no doubt real object of the writer, is to serve the interests of true religion, upon its own unswerving principles of truth and justice. Whether he will or not have done so, is an open question, that at present receives various answers, and which must be referred to a future period for decision.

father *only* of those that handled the harp and the organ,—not professing to make or teach the use of other kinds of instruments of music; and the names of such other persons employed in this other department of the art would not be mentioned here, because not falling in the direct line of genealogy, which the inspired writer was at this time tracing out. We collect further, from this important passage, that, the knowledge and practice of instrumental music was not confined to a few individuals, but that the attention to the art was now, and must have been for sometime, very extensive; and Tubal was so distinguished, either for his skill in the art, or for his great influence in promoting it, as to be styled the *father, instructor,* and *patron,* eminently so, of ALL that handle the harp and the organ.

From this period to the flood, occupying a space of 1000 years, no further allusion is made in this section of scripture to music, in any way whatever. But this is no valid reason that it was not afterwards cultivated. For scarcely any reference is made in the same portion of scripture to any other employment, art, business, or trade, which, either from motives of pleasure or profit, would then have had an existence, from the recorded facts already quoted. So, then, considering no information, no intimation whatever is given in this part of the Bible of many trades, habits, manners, and scientific pursuits which must have prevailed, more or less,

in the vast scope of *one thousand years; music* cannot but be looked upon as very much distinguished, and indeed sanctioned, in the pointed and express passages on which we have been commenting.

CHAPTER II.

What nations first cultivated music after the flood—Egypt the nursery of the arts—the lyre invented by Mercury—Noah and his family settle in the plains of Shinar—Chinese claim the merit of inventing instrumental music—building the tower of Babel—its consequences—Chinese description of their music—Syrian, Chaldean, and Indian music—Laban and Jacob referred to—Europe and America but slightly known to the Egyptians, &c.—Grecian accounts of their music—their numerous songs—Homer's references to vocal music.

ALL quarters of the world, and most nations have their vocal and instrumental music; and in some of which it has long been brought to a high state of perfection; while in others, even in this advanced age of the world, it is scarcely deserving the name of a system.

Much difference of opinion exists among those writers who have devoted most time, and who have brought the most suitable qualifications to the investigation of the subject, as to which nation, after the flood, first invented instruments of music, and most successfully cultivated the art. It must not be forgotten that all account of transactions at the period of which we are now speaking, are manifestly traditional, and, of course, can have but little claim upon our confidence in their truth. They are interwoven and mixed up with a dark,

deep, and widely extended system of mythology. Nearly all their discoveries, either in useful or destructive arts, have been attributed to their gods and goddesses,—persons who, we may suppose, rendered themselves famous either by accident or merit, and so were deified by the ignorance and superstition of the times. Many of these relations are far too ridiculous to be repeated; but a few of the more probable amongst them may be given, partly to gratify the more curious reader, as well as to give something like order and connexion to the work, as without some reference to mythological customs, the thread of history cannot be preserved.

Egypt is considered, amidst some little conflict of opinion, to have been the nursery of the arts and sciences; and of course puts in her claim as the inventor of instruments of music. The earliest tradition states that, "The Nile having overflowed its banks at the periodical time for the rise of that wonderful river, on its subsidence to its usual level, several dead animals were left on the shores, and, amongst the rest, a tortoise, the flesh of which being dried, and wasted in the sun, nothing remained within the shell but nerves and cartilages, which being lightened and contracted by the heat, became sonorous. Mercury, walking along the banks of the river, happened to strike his foot against this shell, and was so pleased with the sound produced, that the idea of the lyre suggested itself to his imagination. The first instrument he

constructed was in the form of a tortoise, and was strung with the sinews of dried animals."*

This account is furnished by Apollodorus, a distinguished writer of Athens, who lived, it is true, many centuries afterward. The Mercury mentioned above, so called by the Latins, but named Hermes by the Greeks, and Thent, or Thoth, by the Egyptians, was secretary to Osiris, one of the kings of Egypt. Attempts have been made to prove very discordant facts: that Osiris was contemporary with Moses, on the one hand, and on the other, that he lived at the time of Noah,—or, indeed, but another name for the same person. Were we not aware of the difficulty of transmitting correct information in the early ages of the earth, we should be disposed to believe such differences of opinion too palpably ridiculous to be listened to for a moment by enlightened and serious investigators; as Moses lived about 956 years before Christ, and Noah about 2000 years.

We are informed in scripture, that Noah and his family (as is supposed some 60 years after the deluge) settled in the plains of Shinar,† which was a part of the ancient Mesopotamia. And traditions say that, shortly afterwards, Ham and his family, taking with them the patriarch Noah, travelled into Egypt and settled there. Were such the fact, it will not surprise us to find that he was styled a

* Constable's Miscellany, vol. 52, p. 16. † Gen. xi. 2.

king. The flute, or pipe, is stated by other writers to have been first invented; and Juba, the second king of Numidia, ascribes it to Osiris (or Noah) himself, which instrument was formed of the rushes that grew on the shores of the Nile.

But the Chinese also put in their claim as the first inventors of instruments of music. They say their first prince, Fo Hi, (whom they also believe to have been contemporary with Noah, with intimations that he was the same distinguished individual,) is said to have "made a most beautiful lyre and guitar, adorned with precious stones, which produced a most noble harmony, curbed the passions, and elevated man to virtue and heavenly truth."* Chao Hao, who lived in the early part of Chinese history, very much improved the science of music. And Confucius, the great oracle of the Chinese, added further improvements, and wrote a work on the subject, but which work was burnt by Shihuangti, one of their emperors, who lived about 200 years before Christ.† Another Chinese account is, that the idea of instruments was first suggested by accidently blowing the pith out of a bamboo.‡ In addition to the above, Diocles has been produced as the discoverer of the instruments under consideration, by having accidentally struck different

* M. Goguet's History of China.

† See Asiatic Journal, Nov. 1823.

‡ London Ency. Art. Music, p. 263.

sized vases, in a pottery, from whence issued sounds of acuteness and gravity.*

Of course these discordant accounts of the invention of musical instruments cannot be received as authentic *en masse* by the intelligent and thoughtful reader; because, other considerations apart, they suppose the world after the flood to be in so low a state of ignorance, as to be inconsistent with the facts furnished by Bible history. This view is pressed with great vividness and force by Sir William Jones,—that knowledge was in a much higher state of perfection in the most distant openings of trustworthy history, than is generally supposed. It may be fairly presumed, that when Noah, his three sons, with their wives and children, went into the ark, they would take with them something like an epitome of the knowledge of the antediluvian world.

We have stated already, that the first formal settlement of this celebrated family was in the plains of Shinar. It is likely, therefore, that knowledge, in its various forms, would in that district first strike its root, and cast forth its fruit. The building of the tower of Babel will support the opinion we are advocating; as that stupendous undertaking would,—supposing the flood to have been general, and every human being, with the exception of the inhabitants of the ark, swept from

* London Ency. Art. Music, p. 263.

the earth,—require more practical and theoretical knowledge than the infant state of society could be supposed to possess, cut off from the legacies of the old world. What took place on that memorable occasion, will also explain how other parts of the world became sharers of their knowledge. In Gen. xi. it is stated, the people said one to another, "Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the surface of the whole earth." And we are informed by the same authority, that the Lord frustrated their design. He said, "Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the whole earth." This event seems to have been contemplated in the command and blessing which God gave the honoured family when they came out of the ark: "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."*

After the miraculous interposition of Divine Providence, on the building of the tower of Babel, the tribes separated, migrating into Assyria, India,

* Genesis ix. 1.

China, Elam, Persia, and other parts of the world, where the knowledge of music, among other things, would be distributed according to the abilities, taste, and whims of the people, and the facilities of the countries in which they settled. It will at once be conjectured, that the introduction of music into those countries would be nearly simultaneous; at least, so it may appear to us in this far-off age, looking through a mazy vista of 4000 years. Nor was there for a series of ages, so far as is now known, anything very dissimilar in their system of music (if system it may be called,) or the instruments they used, with perhaps the exception of the Chinese, who in the division of the octave, and other peculiarities, as well as in their instruments, very early diverged from the theory and practice of the surrounding nations. This statement is supported by the discoveries and general testimonies of Bruce and Belzoni, in their travels through Egypt and adjacent nations. Looking at the character of the Chinese, through the medium of general history, there appears a *precocity* in their advancement in knowledge. They early assumed that inflated and exclusive character amongst the nations, which they have so prominently manifested in modern times. But that disposition which has led them to keep their knowledge to themselves,—which they have done to a considerable extent, preserving their own empire entire, while their neighbours have been torn to

pieces,—has also operated unfavourably for them, in shutting out the benefits of foreign industry. In their national youth they cultivated music with an ardour, that proved it in their estimation to rank among the important branches of their religion and philosophy. Indeed, they have themselves described it as, "the science of sciences; the rich source from whence all others spring." One of their renowned musicians (Linghen Kouiç) describes the surprising effects of his performances by saying, "When I strike harmonious chords, the beasts of the field encompass me, leaping for joy." It has been remarked, that the most ancient specimens of Chinese music bears a striking resemblance to the most characteristic of Scottish airs; which has produced some controversy among writers on musical history, whether one has not borrowed from the other; and if so, which is to be considered the first and principal debtor. The matter however, may be safely considered a natural coincidence; it being such a kind of music as an infant state of society and simple manners would be likely to inspire.

The passing ages have left little behind them to improve the music of China. Indeed, if the accounts of some travellers who have visited the celestial empire are to be credited, they have rather retrograded than otherwise. "The English officers who accompanied Lord Macartney on his embassy, compared their theatrical band to the

confused jingle and jargon of Bartholomew fair; and Mr. Ellis says, 'Myriads of cracked penny trumpets give the best idea of Chinese military music.'"* The Chinese in their turn had as few praises to bestow on ours; for on one occasion, when two rather celebrated pieces of European composition were performed, the performers were astonished to find that no favourable impression was made upon the minds of the audience. And yet, judging from the explanation which they afterwards gave, their insensibility to the charms of our music did not appear to arise from ignorance of the operation of the mental faculties, and the tone of true sympathy in connexion with music: they said, "Our music goes from the ear to the heart, and from the heart to the mind; we feel it; we understand it; but the music which you have just played, we neither feel nor understand—it does not move us. Music is the language of feeling; all our passions have their corresponding tones and proper language; and, therefore, music, to be good, must accord with the passion it professes to express."† A better definition of music certainly need not be given. But if Mr. Stafford's opinion is correct, it will surprise some readers when they are told, that, after the experience of 4000 years, they have neither staff, nor marks, nor characters, to denote the time, the key, the mode of expression, &c.

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* Con. Mis. vol. 52, p. 50. † Ibid, p. 51.

It will be proper to recall the attention of the reader to the other sections of the ancient world, to which we have before made reference: namely, the Syrians, Chaldeans, Indians, &c. There is a passage in Gen. xxxi. 27, which shews, at a period so long ago as 1740 years B.C., the established practice of vocal and instrumental music in Syria; a place celebrated in Scripture as the dwelling place of some of the patriarchs. Laban complains that Jacob should have left him without having previously made known his intention, when he might have had the opportunity of honouring him with the performance of customary ceremonies. "Wherefore," says Laban, "didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me? and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?"

Other passages of scripture inform us that music was assiduously cultivated in Babylon. The period to which we allude, it is true, is more than 1000 years later than the one just cited; being during the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, about 560 years before Christ. In Dan. iii. 5, several kinds of instruments are particularised, and intimations given that there were others in use. These were all brought into requisition when celebrating the golden god which the heathen king had created. The passage runs thus: "At what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sacbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and

worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up."

Europe, a principal part of which is now so pre-eminently distinguished above the rest of the world for the successful cultivation of almost every branch of knowledge, and especially for the propagation of gospel truth, was, a great part of it at least, for ages after the former part of the two periods we have just mentioned, wrapt in the ignorance of infancy. Indeed, many parts of Europe were scarcely known to the Egyptians, and to other comparatively enlightened nations; or if known, only known with contempt, as a race of barbarous tribes, but little raised above their associate brutes.

And America, the United States of which are now vying with Europe in the cultivation and dissemination of every branch of knowledge that can ennoble the man and adorn the Christian, had a still longer sleep in the embrace of heathenish night. It is, however, of importance to observe, that in these parts of the world, both their written histories and traditions testify their love and practice of music.

In leaving the ancient nations of which we have been speaking, and descending with the history of music, Greece rises into notice, one of the most powerful empires that ever existed. And as the Grecians were distinguished for valour, arms, and extent of empire, so were they equally

renowned for their successful cultivation of philosophy, astronomy, poetry, music, and the other branches of science. "The first progress was slow and difficult, but after a time their endeavours were crowned with success, greater than could have been expected. Greece became the seat of politeness, arts, and sciences, the centre of legislation, the parent of wit and genius, and the standard of imitation to all the nations around."*

Many of their works, either entire or in fragments, remain to this day; and are ungainsayable testimonies to the strength of mind, correctness of taste, and genuine flow of poetic feeling which then existed; and present so eminent a standard, that modern reputation in such achievements, thinks it an honour to attain. Nor was the love of music the least prominent part of their character, "For in the period of their greatest barbarism," as Fermely says, "this art outweighed every other merit." It mingled itself with every other study, and the education of no person was deemed complete without some knowledge of music. "Almost every profession appears to have had songs peculiarly appropriated to it. Athenæus mentions the songs of the slaves grinding in the mill, of the gleaners, of the nurses, of the agricultural labourers, and those who had the care of cattle; of the keepers of the public baths, of the shepherds, the reapers, of

* M. Fermely's History of Philosophy, p. 36.

those who got in the harvest, and those who trod out the corn; of the water-drawers, millers, weavers, carders, and dressers of wool, children, &c. They had, likewise, songs adapted to their particular circumstances or ceremonies, and to festivals, as courtships, marriages, funerals, joy, sorrow, &c. They had also blind mendicants, who went from door to door soliciting alms, singing as they traversed the streets in their eleemosynary occupation."

As their mythology was crowded with gods and goddesses, music was in constant requisition, to give effect to the worship which to them was so profusely rendered. Hymns were sung to all their deities, with one exception: "Death was the only god who would neither be moved by offerings, nor conquered by sacrifices, nor oblations; and therefore he was the only one to whom no altar was erected, and to whom no hymns were sung." That great attention was paid to music by the Grecians in their early history is satisfactorily shewn in the writings of Homer, their own poet, who has stood out to all succeeding ages, and to all nations, as a master of song, to be imitated, but rarely equalled, in the majesty, beauty, and pathos with which he invested his theme. To him the reader turns with confidence for a picture of the times in which he wrote. "Music is mentioned in the Iliad and Odyssey upwards of fifty times, and always with rapture. Vocal music, however,

appears to have been the most general; for, although we have singing without instruments, there does not appear the least trace in his writings of instrumental music without vocal. Even dancing seems to have been accompanied with the voice—

> "'Then to the dance they lead the vocal strain,
> Till Hesperus leads forth the starry train.'"

As a considerable part of our knowledge of music,—it is true, in main through the medium of the Romans,—has come from the Greeks, a few more observations on its character, and the circumstances attending its cultivation, may be the reasonable wish of the reader. Such a desire may be supported by recollecting the vast influence which Grecian writings have upon this Christian age, in the formation of literary character. In legislation they present many powerful reproofs to modern systems of national polity. Their eloquence still burns, and melts, and conquers us, as we turn over the pages of Demosthenes; their poetry, stretching over a period of seven or eight hundred years,—by a great number of poets,—in many instances presents such finished specimens of character as to leave the moderns but small chance of adding another charm. Besides, the Grecian character stands out to us in another imposing position. By their extent of empire, and the patronage they gave to learning, a considerable

portion of the knowledge of more ancient nations, as well as that of their contemporaries, became their own, and has been transmitted down to us by the growing consent of ages, under the fascinating appellation of *classical knowledge*. Hence the practice of both poets and musicians inscribing their effusions to some of their popular deities, or to some place rendered famous for musical patronage.

CHAPTER III.

The origin of Greece—fabulous history to be cautiously received—inventions of Minerva, Pan, Mercury, Apollo—celebrated places—names and origin of the muses—names and influence of the Syrens—Dr. J. Johnson's opinion—Olympus and Orpheus—improvement of the lyre—musical achievements of Museus, Chiron, Amphion, &c.—reflections upon Grecian music—musical attainments of Terpander, Pythagoras, &c.—Names, origin, and influence of the national games—Roman music—derived from the Greeks—extensively cultivated—kinds of instruments used—Dr. Burney quoted—Nero's musical character—plays on his lyre while Rome is burning.

GRECIAN history may be divided into fictitious and real,—or, in other words, the fabulous and classical; the fabulous, of course, preceding; commencing with its origin as a nation, which was founded by Cadmus when he landed in that country at the head of a band of Phœnicians, in the first instance forming the kingdom of Thebes. This event is supposed to have taken place about two years after the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt, and about 1493 years before Christ.

Of the vast number of gods and goddesses that held dominion in Grecian mythology, many of them were distinguished for some discovery in music, or some miraculous musical performance. To some of these we shall introduce the reader,

requesting him at the same time to remember, that, though such relations have been put forth as indisputable facts, that he is indeed but wandering through the regions of mythological creations.

Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, is supposed by some persons to have been the inventor of the *single pipe*, or *flute*, though of a different form from the popular instrument which now bears that name; while Pan, another of their gods, is said to have improved upon this discovery by producing a *double* pipe, or flute, or rather a pipe capable of producing a number of sounds. This instrument was called the *syrinx*, and was formed by a number of reeds of unequal lengths being tied together, and the various sounds of acute and grave were formed by blowing into the tubes as they passed backward and forward. According to the fabulists, Pan made the invention of this instrument in an amour with the nymph Syrinx. Hearing music which he thought was her voice, he rushed forth to clasp her in his arms; instead of which, however, he only held a bundle of reeds, the wind blowing through them producing the music that he heard. It is further added, that she was turned into a bundle of reeds when flying from his presence. This instrument was for ages a great favourite among shepherds, who looked upon Pan as their presiding deity. Hence the reason why pastoral poetry, and pastoral music, have been so generally dedicated to this imaginary deity.

The Grecian *lyre* is said to have been invented by Mercury—not the Mercury already mentioned of Egyptian origin. This nimble and cunning god was a great patron of music, but also a great encourager of knaves and robbers, himself an adept in such like practices.

On one occasion, giving a license to his pilfering propensity, he made a discovery which was attended with important results. He stole some oxen from Apollo, and to elude detection, fled to the foot of one of the mountains of Arcadia, a country celebrated for its mountains and shepherds, as being the dwelling place of Pan, and the occasional resort of other gods, as well as skilful warriors and able musicians. In this spot he found a tortoise, which he killed and ate. "As he was diverting himself with the shell, he noticed the sounds it emitted from its concave figure; on which he cut several thongs from a bull's hide, fastened them tight to it, and thus invented a new kind of music." His discovery sounds too much like a copy of the invention of the Egyptian lyre of Hermes, to be entitled to implicit confidence. It is not, however, improbable that something of the kind might have suggested the instrument. And it may be observed that there are sketches in Rome, of very great antiquity, that represent this instrument in the exact form of a tortoise-shell.

According to some, Apollo might contest the right of the invention, but with unequal claims.

As a compensation for the theft, however, Mercury gave the lyre to Apollo, and with it the art of playing upon it in a godlike manner. Apollo was the god of the fine arts, of medicine, eloquence, poetry, and music. He was the only god whose oracle was in general repute all over the then known world. Hence the reason why poets and musicians to this day, many of them at least, formally invoke him as the inspirer of their sweetest strains. The allusions also will here be perceived which abound in our descriptive poetry, of "Arcadian bowers," "Arcadian groves," and "Arcadian music," &c. &c.; and the lyre, indeed, by common consent, has been introduced by poets as the living personification of their sweetest strains.

The *Muses* being such favourites with all poets, and also thereby, so closely connected with music, they cannot with propriety here be passed over in silence. They were certain goddesses who presided over poetry, music, and dancing, and all the liberal arts. They were reputed to be the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne. Their names were Clio, Erato, Thalia, Melpomene, Terpsichore, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Calliope, and Urania; nine in number, a word by which they are oft addressed by poets, as comprehending the virtues and influence of the whole. Apollo was entitled the patron, or leader of the Muses, who were all represented as "young, beautiful, and modest virgins." The palm tree, the laurel, and all the fountains of Pindus, Helicon

and especially Parnassus, were sacred to the Muses. They were fond of solitude. Hence those imaginary flights to Parnassus, to wander through its groves, and loiter around its fountains, in order to catch the inspiration of the Muses. The worship of the Muses was universally established, especially in the enlightened parts of Greece, Thessaly, and Italy. No sacrifices were ever offered to them; but no poet ever began a poem without first making to them a solemn invocation.

The Sirens were sea-nymphs; they were particularly distinguished for their melodious voices; so much so, that people forgot their employment in listening to their strains, and listened with such ardent and continued attention, till at times people were known to perish for want of food. They were in three number, Pharthenope, Ligea, and Leucasia, and usually lived in a small island near the cape Peloros, in Sicily. The Sirens were informed by the oracle that, as soon as any person passed by them without being charmed with their song, they should perish; and their melody had prevailed in calling the attention of all passengers, till Ulysses, informed of the power of their voice by Circe, stopped the ears of his companions with wax, and ordered himself to be tied to the mast of the ship, and no attention to be paid to his commands, should he wish to stay and listen to their song. This was a salutary precaution: Ulysses made signs for his companions to stop, but they were

disregarded, and the fatal coast was past with safety.

That music and poetry, which are usually considered as in affinity with that of the Sirens, is of a pernicious and deceptive character. Lascivious and infidel sentiments, flowing in enchanting strains of music, addressed to the unhallowed passions of human nature, often tempt the hearer to sacrifice durable happiness for the airy pleasures of the present moment. And as the mariners in passing the coast of Sicily were in danger of being shipwrecked upon its shore, by either coming too near, or by staying too long, in order to enjoy the music of the Sirens; so youth, especially, should guard against theatrical amusements, and the wanton charms that there often gather around the strains of music.

Doctor James Johnson, in his usual explicit and forcible manner, with regard to one class of persons to whom we now allude, says, "The story of the Sirens is no fable. It is verified to the letter."

"Their song is death, and makes destruction please. Visit the ball-room and the bazaar, the park and the concert, the theatre and the temple: among the myriads of young and beautiful whom you see dancing or dressing, driving or chanting, laughing or playing, you will hardly find *one* in the enjoyment of health. * * * Everything that merely delights the senses, without improving the *understanding*, must come under the head of *sensual*

gratifications, which tend by their very nature to excess."* How appropriate are the lines of Wesley under such circumstances, and, indeed, where danger is least suspected :—

"Still let us on our guard be found
And watch against the power of sound,
With sacred jealousy:
Lest haply sense should damp our zeal,
And music's charms bewitch and steal
Our hearts away from thee."

But, to return to the order of the subject from this reflective digression, which requires no apology, we observe, Linus rendered himself equally famous for philosophy and music. He was a skilful musician, and improved the lyre by adding another string to it. This so much excited the jealousy of Apollo, that he is said to have put him to death.

Olympus and Orpheus are names very familiar in the history of music about this time. The former is said to have first introduced the practice of striking the lyre with a quill, instead of using the finger for that purpose. "He also is said to have been the inventor of the ancient *inharmonic*, which appears to have been the first regular system of Greek music." The latter made further improvements on the lyre, by adding two other strings, namely, B and C, and thus completing the heptachord, that is, seven sounds, B, C, D, E, F,

* Economy of Health, p. 32.

G, A. The flute was not without obligation to him for improvements made upon that instrument. His great skil land dexterity as a musician, have given rise to the most extravagant stories. When he played, the rivers ceased to flow, the savage beasts of the forests forgot their wildness, and the mountains came to listen to his song. All nature seemed animated and charmed, and the nymphs were his constant companions. With his lyre in his hand he entered the infernal regions, and gained an easy admission to the palace of Pluto. The king of hell was charmed with the melody of his strains, and, according to the enraptured descriptions of their poets, the wheel of Ixion stopped, the stone of Sisyphus stood still, Tantalus forgot his perpetual thirst, and even the furies relented. The fabulists go on to say, that he separated himself from the society of mankind, and sought his principal pleasure by playing, in grottos and on the mountains, on his musical instrument. At his death the muses gave him an honourable burial, and he received divine honours, his lyre also becoming one of the constellations of the heavens.*

Musæus, the disciple of Orpheus, was at once a naturalist, a theologist, a physician, and a musician. Thamyris, who received his instruction in music from Musæus, was especially eminent in the art. He had the courage to challenge the muses to a

* See Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, under that name.

trial of musical skill. The challenge was accepted, and it was stipulated that the vanquished should be totally at the disposal of the conqueror. He was conquered, and the muses deprived him of his eyesight, his melodious voice, and destroyed his lyre. Chiron, the tutor of Achilles, Esculapius, and Hercules, who was distinguished for his knowledge of archery and medicine, was also celebrated for his musical attainments. Amphion was still more famous for his musical talents. He is said to have been taught the science by Mercury, and by him furnished with a lyre. In return, he built an altar, which was the first erected to that god. According to the mythologists, he was still further favoured by that god, by the extraordinary effects produced by his strains. At the sound of his lyre, the rocks moved from their places; and the animated stones rose up, and formed themselves into the wall of Thebes. Perhaps there may be so much of the spirit of truth breathing through the foregoing fable as to lead us to suppose, that, by his poetry, eloquence, and the melodious strains of his lyre, Amphion tamed the spirits, and softened down the fierce manners of the savage Thebans, and led them, in the cultivation of more social pleasures, to build a wall for their defence.

Other names, distinguished for their achievements in the science, either as contemporary with, or immediately following the above, might be given. But while some readers may be gratified with such

relations, and even wish for a more extended sample, others may say, what is given is more than enough; and the Christian reader, with his mind solely intent on acquiring simple scriptural truth, may think such fabulous accounts ought to sink into lasting oblivion. But such persons may do well to remember, that those statements have long become matters of general history; and, besides gratifying a harmless curiosity, by being introduced with the crude, monstrous, and mischievous notions of those dark ages, especially on those higher moral and religious principles, which constitute the true dignity and happiness of man, we shall be led to see more beauty in the moral picture of the world, since "Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel." And as it respects the subject, with which we mainly have to do, two observations may be introduced as worthy of notice. First, even from these acknowledged fabulous relations, we infer that music has not been a mere local and accidental engagement of mankind; but that it has been from the earliest ages, one of the principal branches of study, with respect to business, religion, and recreation. And, secondly, notwithstanding the mass of rubbish in which they were enveloped, the effects of ancient music must have been very surprising. "We are not to believe these stories in their full extent, nor, indeed, to understand them literally at all. But those who have witnessed the influence of music

either upon the rude passions of a collected multitude, or upon the melancholy temperament of isolated individuals, will not discredit them entirely. On the contrary, in all the traditions of antiquity, however preposterous and absurd they may appear to us, we believe that some real event was shadowed forth, and that under an allegorical veil of poetic embellishment, the substance of truth is concealed."

In descending the history of Greece, the accounts become less fabulous, and the reader treads on more solid ground. For a considerable time they had no regular method of committing their music to each other, but it was left to tradition, to memory, and the taste of the performer. To Terpander, who lived about 670 years before the Christian era, is the invention of notation and musical characters attributed; an invention which, though very defective when compared to its vastly improved state in modern times, greatly contributed to the correctness and permanency of music.

Further accessions were made to the system of music by Pythagoras, a distinguished philosopher, mathematician, and musician, who flourished about 500 years B.C. He applied his philosophy in giving to music an intellectual character. He considered it not only designed to give pleasure to the ear, but, through the medium of the passions, to minister to the sublime operations of the mind. His conceptions of music as a science seemed to rise much higher than those of any of his prede-

cessors, as well as by the application of original genius in ascertaining the principles on which it is constructed. Pythagoras considered numbers the principle of everything; and he subjected the whole theory of music to the test of mathematical calculations. He gave the first regular series of sound and measurement of musical intervals. This he did by the use of the monochord, an instrument of one string, and having a moveable bridge, and placing it at proper distances. By this means the octave was divided into tones and half tones, and the ear was trained to the perception, and the voice to an easy intonation of natural melody. Pythagoras also established certain rules to find out the mathematical proportion of the consonances: that is, the agreement of certain chords within the octave. A simple and an accidental circumstance, which by some is given as an "idle invention," and by others as a fact, is said to have furnished him with a practical illustration of his theory. As he was passing a blacksmith's shop, he heard four hammers strike upon an anvil, which produced consonant sounds, as tuning forks would do, if of proper sizes. He had them slung, and observed that, when struck, they produced the same sound as when they came in contact with the anvil. He had them weighed, and found the smallest was six pounds, the next eight, the third nine, and the largest twelve pounds, corresponding with the respective divisions which he had previously made

between the consonances. He thence concluded that, not only should the octave be divided into twelve semitones, but that the chords in their relative proportions, as instanced in the hammers, would, if struck together, produce agreeable harmony. So important did this philosopher think the practice of music, that, "with the addition of chants, modulations, and rhythms, he thought it would correct morals, and cure all the diseases of the soul." But he carried his musical principles still further, and brought within their influence the operations of the heavenly bodies. He held that the planets moved in harmonious concert, and varied in their tones according to their relative distances to each other, and from the earth. A passage in Job might have suggested this notion, where it is said, "The morning stars sang together." This book might have come under his observation when studying in Babylon under the celebrated Zoroaster, who is said to have been a servant, in the early part of his life, to one of the prophets. This notion was too susceptible of fanciful illustration not to be laid hold of by the poets. Milton, among the rest, has given it a charm in the following stanza:—

"Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow."

We have already intimated that very great encouragement was given to music by all classes of the Grecians. It is highly probable that nothing contributed more to its extension and permanency than their national games. They were four in number. The Pythian games were celebrated near the temple of Delphi. The Nemean games were celebrated in Argolis, between Cleana and Phlius, and were instituted by the Argives in honour of Archemorus, who died by the bite of a serpent. The Isthmian games were so named from their being celebrated on the Isthmus of Corinth. And the fourth of their national and sacred games was the Olympian. These games were of great antiquity, running up into their fabulous history, and thereby rendering the date of their origin very uncertain. The commencement of each of them seems to lie somewhere between twelve and thirteen hundred years before the Christian era. The Olympian games fell into disuse, or nearly so, for a time; but, on Corebus obtaining a victory, 776 years B.C., they were re-instituted, and from that time regularly celebrated. This period became a memorable era among the Greeks, who ever afterwards computed their time from it, as we now do from the birth of Christ.

At these games the choicest specimens of Grecian genius were presented; and emulation prompted astonishing displays of gymnastic talent. But, among racing, fighting, wrestling, orations,

poems, music ever blended its charms, and held an important place. Indeed, it is said that the Pythian games, for some time at first, consisted entirely in a contest of musical skill. Old Hesiod, the poet, was not allowed to enter the lists, because he could not play upon the harp. All kinds of instruments then known were brought into use, with the exception of the flute, which after trial, at least at one of the games, was rejected, on account of its producing too solemn a tone for the occasion, and was afterwards principally employed at funerals. The prizes which were awarded, though in themselves contemptible, bore the plaudits of millions, and stimulated the combatants, as well as their abettors and spectators, to the improvement of music. On these occasions, no doubt their music was very noisy and vociferous.

"Lucian tells us of a young flute player, named Harmonides, who, on his first public appearance, began a solo with so loud and violent a blast, intending to surprise and elate the audience, that he breathed his last breath into his flute, and died upon the spot. It is also recorded, that the trumpet-players at these exhibitions were overjoyed when they found, at their close, that they had neither rent their cheeks, nor burst their blood vessels, by their exertions; and they used a bandage, extending round the head, under the ears, with a hole for the mouth, and supported by

a transverse piece going over the crown of the head; this was for the purpose of preventing their cheeks from swelling."

It is well known that Rome was under great obligation to Greece, for much that distinguished her musical character. It is true she had music, which, in common with other nations, might be termed their own; but it was barbarous and distorted for a length of time. But Rome shot forth the sinews of her strength, and spread out the boundaries of her empire; Greece then became the object of her envy; her most precious example, and a source of knowledge to which she was continually, and more and more gaining access, in order to transplant whatever was valuable in the Grecian character, to embellish her own. In all regular histories of Rome, and many that make occasional references to the subject, accounts of her music are more or less interspersed. Music early mingled itself with the warlike exploits of the Romans, but not so much in the character of what we now term *martial music;* the object of which is, to give a charm to desperate adventure, to inspire in patriotic breasts the burning resolve to pluck even from the hand of death the palm of victory:—and, after the "tug of war," to exhilarate their spirits, and grace their victories. Hence, in one of Romulus' triumphs, the whole army followed their general from the field of battle, "hymning their gods in songs of their own country, and

celebrating their general in extemporary verses." And in all their religious services music formed a part. A practice somewhat analogous to what has prevailed in modern times, was enjoined upon the people of Rome, 450 years B.C. "In the laws of the ten tables we find particular mention of musicians; by these laws the number of flute players to be employed at funerals was limited to ten; and it was decreed, 'the praises of honoured men should be displayed in an assembly of the people, and that mournful songs, accompanied with a flute, should attend their praises.'"

The flute was an instrument often mentioned in ancient history, but of which there were several kinds. There was the *equal* flute, the *unequal* flute, the *right handed* flute, the *left handed* flute. Of their form, manner of use, and the peculiarity of tone, no correct information remains. A few things, however, may be asserted of them with tolerable certainty. They were all wind instruments; some were curved, and some were straight; some had holes in them, on which, by the motion of the fingers, the various sounds were produced; and on others, the music was originated by the application of the mouth, after the manner in which horns and trumpets are used. But none of them were blown into when held in an horizontal position, as we hold our fifes and German flutes. The number of instruments used by the Romans was considerable, exceeding that of the Grecians.

The Grecian theory of music was adopted by the Romans, but without producing any material discoveries in the science.

A great plague raged in Rome about 360 years B.C., which, strange as it may sound in Christian ears, gave rise to dramatic exhibitions. These institutions made a large draught on musical skill, and gave a new impulse to its popular cultivation. "Music," says Dr. Burney, "was in great favour at Rome during the latter end of the republic, and the voluptuous times of the emperors; the stage flourished, the temples were crowded, festivals frequent, banquets splendid; so that we may suppose it to have been very much used, both upon public and private occasions, in so rich, populous, and flourishing a city as Rome, the mistress of the world."

During the time of the emperors, music was much patronised, and by some of them personally cultivated. A remarkable instance we have in the case of the perfidious, tyrannical, and bloody Nero; a name loaded with the execrations of heathens, and saturated with the blood of Christians; a name that conferred no respect on the profession, and only mentioned now to shew his anxiety to obtain its honours, of which he was so unworthy. Nero ascended the throne in the year A.C. 54, in the nineteenth year of his age. After murdering his mother, and many of the courtiers, by whom he deemed his pleasures to have been

obstructed, and revelling for a time in the lowest dens of midnight debauchery, he turned actor at Naples, and appeared as a public singer. The celebration of the Olympian games attracted his notice; he therefore passed over to Greece, and presented himself as a candidate for public honours. He was defeated in his attempt to obtain the prize by merit; but, by his flattery, he corrupted the judges, and obtained the victory. The artful monarch returned to Rome with all the pomp and splendour of an eastern conqueror, drawn in the chariot of Augustus, and attended by a numerous band of musicians. In order to excel in vocal music, and conquer the disadvantages of a hoarse, rough voice, he submitted to many privations, and, among the rest, would often abstain from food for a day together. He not only delighted to perform before the higher classes of his subjects, but he invited the whole population of Rome to hear him. It is said, "he never suffered an audience to depart until he was tired himself, and frequently not only detained them the whole day, but the night also. Spies were set to watch their behaviour, and woe to those who shewed the least signs of dissatisfaction." In a fit of infernal bitterness against Christians, he involved, by a remarkable expedient, the whole population of Rome in desolation. "He had heard of the burning of Troy, and wishing to renew that dreadful scene, he caused Rome, in

different places, to be set on fire. The conflagration soon became universal, and during nine successive days the fire was unextinguished. All was desolation; nothing was heard but the lamentations of mothers, whose children had perished in the flames, the groans of the dying, and the continual fall of buildings." Nero was the only one who enjoyed the scene. He placed himself on the top of a high tower, the better to command a view of the general consternation. He then paraded his musical skill, and sang to his lyre the destruction of Troy, while Rome was burning to ashes.

CHAPTER IV.

Music of the ancient Britons—the difficulty of gaining correct information on it—enquiry into its agreement with other music—influence of the Druids—opinions of various historians—Geoffry of Monmouth referred to—traffick of the Phœnicians &c. with Britain—Herodotus quoted—the sciences very early cultivated—Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and British music compared—various authors' opinions quoted—jealousy of Scotch writers over the honour of their music—the Saxons introduced their music with the conquest.

We shall commence this chapter with a view of music as connected with the character of Britain; a view especially interesting to her inhabitants, who unite to a love of the science, a glowing attachment to country and home. It will be quite apparent from a cursory inspection of our history, that music has not been slighted by our forefathers, but on the contrary, particularly in some periods, has been encouraged with enthusiasm, and introduced with effect into all the soft and terrific scenes of life. Whether our nation has equally contributed to the improvement of the art with our near, south-easterly neighbours, or our distant and ancient easterly acquaintances, may be a matter of doubt. Another question of greater importance, and one also of more difficult solution, arises here, in regard to the *character* of British music, and the *source* from whence it was derived.

To supply all the information involved in this enquiry, would far exceed the plan of this work, and the ability of the author. Such a task,—pursuing the streams of information to their remote mountain risings, would require the unremitting labour of years of study, accompanied by an extent of erudition, and patience of research, not usually found in one individual. But the main advantages of such an undertaking may be enjoyed by a shorter cut, and by less expense of time and thought, by availing ourselves of the labours of others, of those distinguished individuals whose tastes and literary qualifications, with the facilities of expanding knowledge in latter times, have fitted and enabled them to penetrate the darkness of antiquity, and decipher the hieroglyphical languages of nations now no more,—shake the dust from the rolls that embosomed the spirits of mysterious things, and present them to the public eye, so that "he who runs may read."

But even with these helps, the free ingress to those paths which have been trodden and marked out by eminent men, in pursuing their respective inquiries, no small portion of attention is necessary in examining their numerous statements, collating their import and bearings, so as to form a just opinion on the point at issue. It may be also observed, that the labour required in searching for musical lore, is not merely in the proportion of one trait to the whole number that go to make up the

national character; for the customs, pursuits, and employments of a people are so mixed up together, that in gaining specific information on one part, we are brought of necessity with more or less attention, to notice the whole. This is clearly the case in regard to music. For in all our memorable achievements, whether national or domestic, civil, religious, or military, in the eruptions of society, and the ingemination of events, music has ever formed a part of the agency, besides its ordinary accompaniment to the steady march of time. Thus, then, for aught we know to the contrary, the voice of music was one of the first symptoms of our national life; and it has ever been an essential element in our national character.

In endeavouring to ascertain the source of British music, it is natural to examine into the peculiarity of its formation, and see if there be any features of resemblance to any of the ancient systems, so far as to establish between them a family connexion. But in this pursuit, difficulties cross our path by the schisms in our own music, as the Welsh, Scotch, and Irish are each emulous for variation, superiority, and antiquity. So much minute consideration as we shall be enabled to give to these domestic rivalships, we shall, however, for the present pass over, and refer to its *general* character, as the point of comparison. From this elevated position, where the lines of agreement meet, can its genealogy be traced out.

It is humiliating to the pride of investigation, to find that even here the vigour of hope sickens into despair. It cannot legitimately be identified. The British music is, indeed, said, from its ardent, sensitive, and volatile diction, and tenderness of feeling with which it is suffused, rather to resemble the eastern modes, than the rude, open, and masculine strains of the Saxon and Teutonic. This opinion is supported by several German critics, to which we have referred, in regard to Chinese music, in a former part of this work. But this is so much like an accidental circumstance, which is found to exist between other systems of acknowledged independent origin, that it cannot here be admitted as a proof of derivation.

We may next turn a brief attention to the testimony of history, as to who first discovered this country, and who by such a connexion would be likely, with other knowledge, to impart that of music. On this subject there are more conclusions than one. One opinion ascends no higher than the invasion of Julius Cæsar, 55 years before Christ. The Roman conqueror found the mass of the people rude, barbarous, and cruel. He also found in the westerly part of the island, a secluded and cultivated class, which were divided into three parts. The first and most influential were the Druids, devoted to religion; the second were Eubates, or those who applied themselves to philosophy; and the third were the bards and

musicians, whose business it was to compose verses and songs, and sing them to their harps, in praises to their heroes and gods. It is said that one Druis founded the order of the Druids; and his son Bardus, who was much skilled in music, instituted that of the bards. Hence their music, it is supposed, with other acquisitions, if imported, would come from the continent, as Spain, Gaul, or the Teutonic countries. The history of Julius Cæsar is considered by the class of writers who adopt this view, among whom are Hume, Goldsmith, Mackintosh, and others, as the only one which can be adopted with any shew of fidelity.

But the spirit of inquiry has lately somewhat disturbed this opinion, and the traditionary accounts of our very early state, which have flowed down the stream of time in different nations, and which have occasionally found lodgments in writing; yet, nevertheless, were looked upon as *pure fable*,—in them lately have been discovered some glimmerings of truth. From concurring testimony, of varying degrees of merit, the history of England may be traced up above eleven hundred years before Christ, to the time when Samuel the prophet flourished in Israel. Of this opinion Milton in his history of England, is not the most feeble advocate. The domestic source of this belief is found in the Welsh Triads, a work of an historical character, lately made readable to the public by a Mr. Owen;

and the "Chronicles of Geoffry of Monmouth," a writer who was a bishop in the Romish church, and lived in the twelfth century. The writer of the "Chronicles," collected his materials from accounts then existing, and no doubt in many cases, filled up the chasms by the supplies of his own imagination. They agree in stating that Brutus the Trojan, the great grandson of Æneas was the first that visited the shores of Britain, which was at the period we have mentioned above.

Another hypothesis is, that this country was discovered by the Phœnicians at a period still earlier than that put forth in the "Chronicles." This however is rather inferred, than given as an historical fact, from a consideration of their temples, priests, worship, idols; the ecclesiastical and philosophical character of the Druids; as well as the proper names in the Welsh language, and the figures of monuments both artificial and natural which still remain. In all these respects, the aboriginal inhabitants of Britain, identify themselves with the Phœnicians and Persians more than with those of any other people. Thus writes Doctor William Borlase, a writer of eminent learning and antiquarian research, who lived in the beginning of the eighteenth century, — "The Phœnicians were very conversant with the Persians for the sake of their eastern trade; and nothing is more likely than that the Phœnicians, and after them the Greeks, finding the Druids

devoted beyond all others to superstition, should make their court to that powerful order, by bringing them continual notices of oriental superstitions, in order to promote and engross the lucrative trade which they carried on in Britain for so many ages. And the same channel that imported the Persian, might also introduce some Jewish and Egyptian rites. The Phœnicians traded with Egypt, and had Judea at their own doors; and from the Phœnicians the Druids might learn some few Egyptian and Jewish rites, and interweave them among their own." * Herodotus, a Grecian historian, who flourished about 450 years before Christ, thus writes,—"I have nothing certain to relate concerning the western boundaries of Europe. I know as little of the islands called Cassiterides, [a name which early classical history gives to the British Isles] except from the tin which is thence imported among us; and though I have diligently enquired, yet have I never seen any man, who by his own experience could inform me of the nature of that sea, that bounds the extremities of Europe; however, it is certain that umber and tin come from its remotest parts."

It certainly does appear somewhat surprising, that this celebrated writer, possessing so much

* See also some valuable papers on the "Origin and history of the Ancient Britons, and of British Druidism" in Dearden's Miscellany, for 1839, by T. Ragg.

historical and geographical knowledge, and who is reputed to have gained a considerable portion of his information from actual observation, having travelled far beyond the boundaries of Greece, even into Egypt, and perhaps into Judea, should not have been able to have supplied a more specific account of the people of this country. It must not be forgotten, however, that the art of navigation in all its branches, at the time of which we are speaking, must have been very imperfectly known, and equally limited in its operation. And, as commercial selfishness was no doubt as prominent then, as is the case in later times, so those countries or provinces which possessed any trading advantages over others, would naturally endeavour to prevent their source and means of acquirement from being publicly known. In confirmation of this supposition, we are told, "The Phœnicians, according to Strabo, were long accustomed to visit the Cassiterides from Spain, for the sake of a profitable trade in tin, lead, and skins. So jealous were they, we are told, of that monopoly of this commerce which they had at one time enjoyed, that when the Romans followed a Phœnician ship bound hither, for the purpose of discovering the market, the master ran the vessel a-ground, and destroyed it, rather than let them trace his course; and he was remunerated out of the public treasury. Through this channel, however, the Greeks generally, and finally the Romans, became

well acquainted with the existence of Britain; and what was its then staple commodity—tin."*

From these brief testimonies, familiar to all who have paid any attention to the subject, and which might easily have been increased, we must conclude, that Britain was peopled at a very early date; and not only so, but peopled with inhabitants of some knowledge in the arts and sciences. We should also recollect, that in all the accounts of foreigners, whether Romans, Grecians, or Phœnicians, who have visited the shores of Britain, a class of people is spoken of who were distinguished for their philosophical and religious knowledge. It is in vain to ask, who first instructed them in the principals of mineral and chymical knowledge, and introduced among them their religious systems, so complex and elaborate as to have supposed much mental power and severe application. We might observe, that Wales is reckoned by many to have been peopled by the descendants of Ham, the second son of Noah; while Scotland was colonised from the continent of Europe, the line of ascent running through the Teutonic, Scandinavian, and Celtic nations, up to Gomer, and Japhet, the third son of Noah. But we must recollect ourselves: we are not writing a history of England, but are endeavouring in a comprehensive manner to specify the character of

* See London Ency. Art. Britain.

its *music*, and the source from whence it is derived. In pursuing this object, we have attempted to point out the parentage of Britons; supposing that if we succeeded in that, little difficulty would remain in showing to whom we were indebted for our music. If we have failed, however, we have violated no promise; and if we have done nothing more, difficulties may have been suggested which will tend to soften disappointment.

Of the ancient music of Britain, we have no records of value that explain its theory; they are chiefly directed to the degrees of *estimation* in which it was held, and the various and surprising *results* which it produced. We should not be justified in attributing to it greater scientific perfection than was possessed in Greece and Rome at the same period.

The specimens of Irish and Welsh music have generally a more close agreement with each other, than the Scotch have with either. Doctor Crotch, in his "Introduction to Specimens of various Styles of Music," says "That the regular measures and diatonic scale of the Welsh music are more congenial to the English taste in general, and appear at first more natural to English musicians, than those of the Irish or Scotch. Welsh music not only solicits an accompaniment, but being chiefly composed for the harp, is usually found with one." From the general testimony of those most competent to judge, the Welsh music carries with it

an air of imposing originality, and pathos of expression, which renders it indescribably beautiful and captivating.

In the descriptions of Irish music, Giraldus Cambrensis, an important authority of the twelfth century, remarks, that in their musical instruments "they were incomparably well instructed beyond any nation he had seen. For the modulation was not as in the British [English] instruments, slow and morose, but swift and pleasant." He speaks highly also of their music, describing it as sweet and pure, with a full melody, whether it runs through four notes, or extends to five, and of a pleasing harmony. They always begin and end upon a soft note. And, unlike many other countries in their attachment to instruments, they practised themselves in the use of two, and they were the harp and the drum.

The collected opinions, consolidated by Mr. Nathan, are equally complimentary to the Irish and Scotch. "In their earliest days they held music in the highest veneration, and allowed their bards and minstrels many privileges; most justly do they still estimate their national airs, for they breathe the language of nature. How often are the most indescribable sensations awakened by a Scotch or Irish melody, which presents no other charm than its own simplicity and peculiarity, void of all extraneous ornament, but infinitely rich in nature and feeling."

By gazing intensely upon a beautiful object for a length of time, how it drinks up the attention, and insensibly throws its spirit into the most secret chambers of our inner man, and revels on the throne of judgment, indeed, preventing the justice of decision to other distant objects, while we are under its influence; and this control and bias will be greater as the object of our regard is fortified by other interests which are every day around us. So it is with the Scotch, in regard to their music. We cannot but incline to think, with all reasonable homage to the beauty and raciness of its strains, and every excellence it possesses, that its praises in the land O'Cakes are quite as ardent as its merits can justly claim. We may give a specimen from one of its leading periodicals. "Taken all in all, we are not convinced that there is any other body of national music in the world that surpasses that of Scotland in force, in character, in versatility, or in genius. We certainly feel not a little exultation at our superiority in this respect, over our neighbours of England, to whom we are willing to bow with a proud humility in many other subjects of comparison; but whom, we rejoice to think, we can always out-do in the matter of mountains and music. We are far from denying the English the praise of musical feeling, and we are grateful for the great contributions which, by their regular and scientific compositions, they have made to

the general stock of musical pleasure. * * But we are speaking of that aboriginal, or self-sown, music, which is referable to no individual author, or school of authors, but seems to be the fruit of the very soil itself, and reveals, by the raciness of its character, and the peculiar qualities of its native bed. * * * Although recognising the great sweetness of many of the English airs, we think that, as far as we have yet seen, few, or none of them, exhibit those decided features, either of antiquity or of peculiar origin, by which our Scottish airs are so strikingly marked."*

Emulous of distinction, and rising with their theme to the height of their highest mountains, several of the Scottish writers have laboured to discover the elementary canons on which their music is constructed.

Mr. George Thompson, in his "Dissertation concerning the National Melodies of Scotland," published in 1822, points out one of its fundamental laws. He says, "There is but one series of sounds in the national scale, upon which every Scottish air is constructed, whatever may be its varieties, either of mode or character; * * * and that the scale is the modern diatonic scale, divested of its fourth and seventh." Two reasons he gives as proof. First, there are, he says, many instruments in different nations wanting

* See Blackwood's Mag. for Jan. 1839.

those notes. Secondly, most of the ancient Scottish airs are deficient of those sounds. In regard to the first, it is maintained by the best authorities, that, in Scotland, instruments have not wanted those notes, but have been so constructed as fully to carry out the diatonic scale. And the proof fails in regard to the second point, as but few of the Scottish tunes are without sounds upon the fourth and seventh of the key, even those of most ancient date. And one of his reviewers, after a careful examination of the collection of airs in Thompson's "Orpheus," published in 1825, says, "We have with reference to these views gone carefully over the volume, and the result of our examination is, that out of fifty airs which it contains, only about half a dozen are defective, both in the fourth and seventh. Ten of them contain a flat seventh in the minor key, and the whole of them, abating here and there a stray appoggiatura of the editor's, are referable to the system of modes, with this exception, that, in minor keys, the ascending sixth and seventh are generally made sharp—a feature which does not radically affect the structure of the melody, and which we know from historical evidence, to have been a modern innovation."

The sensibilities of the human ear, and that faculty which appreciates the quality and modes of sounds, is substantially the same in all ages and countries; yet, admitting, without any compromise

of its principles, like many other things, a variety of modification, occasioned by the difference of tastes and knowledge. It cannot, surely, be contended, that the fourth of the major key in the ascending octave, containing six semi-tones, is agreeable to such primary laws. On the major keys of F and D, for instance, no composer would think of removing the flat from the B in the former case, or the sharp from C in the latter case, as being more consonant with good melody. It amounts to nothing to say, that an air is at times improved by substituting naturals in the places of those symbols in such situations. These deviations, together with the adoption of accidentals, where flats and sharps would not be allowed by the voice of the system, have the character of judicious exceptions to a general rule. It will not hence follow, that many of the Scottish airs were not composed at a period anterior to the use of flats and sharps. But their antiquity cannot be brought to support the theory on which we are animadverting, even allowing to such specimens, to which we have just referred, the claim of superior melody, as it is most likely their composers would avoid touching those internals which would produce such discordant sounds.

It is plain nothing would be gained, by proving the organization of such a musical code to have anciently existed, as it appears generally to have

been "more honoured in the breach, than in its observance."

Another writer, of considerable musical reputation, Mr. Fenlay Dun, and one, too, who claims alliance with the mountains beyond the Twede, in his "Analysis of the Scottish Music,"* is less precise and dogmatic in his definitions of what constitutes the *peculiar* character of Scottish music. He observes, "We cannot say, with our scanty information upon the subject, what the Scottish scales originally were."

But we have stayed too long with our northern neighbours, and must turn our attention towards England. But here we find but little that is properly characteristic of English music, for any extent of time. Our political, civil, and religious institutions have been the subjects of many sweeping and radical revolutions. In all which events, music has more or less been influenced.

The Saxons, when they conquered England, brought over with them their music, which, like their language, continues to display the freedom and strength of the English character. Of our music it may be said,

> "With rough majestic force it moves the heart,
> And strength and nature make amends for art."

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* His Analysis is prefixed to the Skene M.S. lately laid before the public by William Dauney, F.S.A.

After all, it is but a fruitless exercise to attempt to trace out the line of demarcation between the music of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, even at any known period, much more to observe their curved and zigzag course; their extension and contraction, as circumstances have operated in the current of history. Broils and sanguinary wars have been not unfrequent between them, especially in ages gone by. This, together with the reactions of emigrations, which would take place on the reverses of the fortunes of war between them, would lead us to imagine that the character of their music at no one time, can have been very dissimilar. It is true, during long intervals of peace, or when the people were able to keep their borders unbroken by a foreign foe, their music, with their other arts and customs, would acquire a nationality of character not speedily to be annihilated. No doubt, as time progressed through a series of ages, the features of nations, though at first alike, vary in their appearance. So, for instance, the German and English music compared together, may *now* appear rather distant relations.

CHAPTER V.

The Church contributed to the improvement of music—St. Ambrose—St. Gregory—their improvements—their system examined—the organ first introduced into the Church—Alfred the Great patronized music—Romish Church favourable in its constitution to the accomplishment of any object—bards and minstrels common in several nations—Ossian quoted—William the Conqueror—anecdotes of Taillefer, Master Henry the versifier—Chaucer referred to—further account of minstrels—Spencer quoted—statute passed by Elizabeth for their suppression—Italian music—Gurdo Aretino's improvements—Palestrina, Scarletti, Corelli, Tartini, their improvements—Calvin, Luther, and Latimer referred to—Marbeck, Bull, Carey, Purcell, Pepusch, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven.

DURING several of the first ages of Christianity, music was indebted to the Church for its principal encouragement. It became, indeed, a part of the education of the clergy, under whose care it was generally placed. Many of them have stamped their names indelibly upon its history, as its chief contributors.

St. Ambrose, the celebrated bishop of Milan, who began his presidency over that See about the year 374, exerted himself greatly in improving and adapting music so as more effectually to aid public and private devotion. He excited others to the same regard for its interests both by example and precept, but especially pressed the matter of its encouragement upon the clergy under his care.

Among the many pieces said to have been composed by this distinguished bishop, one only remains to commemorate the reputed merits of its fellows fourteen hundred years ago. Indeed, his *Te Deum* is one of the most ancient pieces of ecclesiastical music extant. It is, after all, a matter of doubt with many, whether this composition has reached our hands in the same state in which St. Ambrose left it. This doubt is fostered by a full knowledge of the very imperfect state of notation at the time in which the piece is said to have been written, and which remained pretty much the same for ages after. They had but four lines in the *staff*, if, indeed, so many, for at times, it is certain, they had but two; no *barrs*, nor *rests*, nor *notes*, expressive of *relative length of time*. The music was generally fitted to certain words, which, like a piece of machinery, could not be separated with effect. But, with this precise adaptation of music and words, which would seem to remind each other of its duty, much must have been left to the taste and skill of the performer.

St. Gregory, who flourished about 600 years after Christ, endeavoured to improve upon his predecessors. He established a singing school in Rome; and although he made the music of divine worship a part of the duty of the clergy, yet he excused them from its immediate labour in the hours of devotion; and he was the first of the popes who separated them from the choristers, or chanters,

in their public performances. The music of St. Ambrose was chiefly cast into four modes, or styles. They were made "according to the *natural,* or diatonic order of progression, without any accidental alteration of flats or sharps, that is, from D (the first mode) upwards to its octave above; from E, F, G, A, and B, in like manner, employing, in short, in all these scales, the same sounds as the moderns do in the scale of C major (which was also among the number,) but beginning the series from D, E, F, G, A, or B, according to the mode."* Pope Gregory extended the modes of St. Ambrose to eight. He not only gave extension, but variety to the Ambrosian music. He subsituted the Roman letters, instead of the complicated Greek characters: the seven capital letters marking the notes in the lower or grave octave, and the seven small ones those of the upper octave. These, and other improvements, were effected by him. Still, in comparison of the present system of notation, it must have been very indefinite, confused, and perplexing. At that period, and for a length of time after, the number of lines in the staff amounted to ten, and even more. Sometimes the words of the psalm, or hymn were written within the staff, and the syllables disposed higher or lower, as the music was intended to run, which was further signified by the seven letters being placed at the

* Dun's Analysis.

commencement of the staff. And often the figure denoting the sound of the syllable was written over it, and joined together by ligatures. Besides these symbols, there were many other arbitrary characters, denoting the length and abbreviations of the notes, the depression and fullness of voice, and various other matters. The square and lozenge, appear to be the only figures of notes then used.

The organ was first introduced into the Romish church by Pope Vitalianus in 658; and soon after that time, St. Dunstan, a distinguished musician, made it welcome in the English churches and convents. The first organ seen in France was sent from Constantinople, in 757, by the Emperor Constantine IV. as a present to King Pepin.

Alfred the Great added to his many excellencies, and brilliant achievements, that of musician. The use which he made of his practical skill on one occasion, is well known to the readers of English history. He gave great encouragement to the art in various ways, but especially by founding a professorship at Oxford, and by sending over to Rome for the best singing master, that his people might have the best instruction, and the latest improvements. By the latter act, he caused the bland exciting charms of music, to blend with the open manliness, and rude integrity of the Saxon character; and by the former, he perpetuated the benefits for ages yet to come.

We might observe, that, prior to this period,

Bede, commonly called "the Venerable Bede," had given to music all the assistance which his exalted station in the church, and his powerful talents could command. This information is derived from a Church History which he wrote, one of the most valuable works of those times, and in which he records the names of the celebrated persons who sympathised with him in his efforts to promote the melody of the church.

In every opening of general Church History, so often as music comes under notice, it is very evident that it was considered highly important in religious worship; and not only formed a part of clerical, but of superior lay education. It is said that seven or eight years was a period not more than enough, for a person to understand the science. Nor need our wonder grow to incredulity at the statement: for although they had not the profusion of detail flowing from tested principles, which enlightened taste is now ever laying open to view, yet the want of an uniform system, and the numerous and frightful chasms which had to be filled up by the skill of the performers, rendered the progress of education both slow and precarious.

The constitution of the Roman Catholic church was then, as it still is, favourable to the dissemination of any new ceremony or tenet. The Pope has only to issue his bull, and the command runs immediately through all the official channels; while obedience implicitly waits upon it in the

most distant ramifications of the church. As soon, therefore, as the gospel was preached in England, and had gained anything like an establishment, the music used in the older section of the church was introduced. Pope Gregory, to whom we have already referred, interested himself in importing into the English pale the improvements which he himself had effected, both in psalmody and chanting.

We are not, however, to infer, from this view of the Romish hierarchy, favourable as it was to the dissemination of musical knowledge at the time of which we are speaking, that this authority and readiness of communication have always been exercised in a way equally commendable. For, lower down in history, in what are termed the middle ages, when the vitals of this self-same, self-styled infallible church became corrupted at the core, by a thirst for wealth, power, and sensual gratification, all the efforts of learning, genius, and taste, to elevate the character of the people, became completely interdicted, except so far as comported with her unhallowed purposes. Thus crushed and broken, the true spirit of liberty and piety lay hid for ages, beneath a pall of ecclesiastical despotism.

But we are not to imagine that, though the Church gave a tone to the public mind in favour of sacred music, that *secular* music, in its various branches, was not held in respect. The brief

remarks at the commencement of this part of the work, will have shewn that such has, more or less, been the case in Great Britain from time immemorial. Scarcely any office or profession, whether of business or pleasure, has been more influential and celebrated than that of bard, rhymer, minstrel, singer, juggler, troubadour, and minnesinger: names given by different nations, with slight modifications, to the same art. The latter were among the earliest poets of Germany, and deeds of war formed, mainly, the burden of their theme. The Troubadours prevailed in Provence, a name for an ancient tract of country, which comprehended a portion of the present France and Spain. They sang of war, but were chiefly employed to celebrate the intrigues and triumphs of love. Bards and minstrels, are names peculiar to Britain and Ireland They generally embraced, and often promiscuously were employed for both poets and musicians, and sometimes the dancer. But in no part of the world hath this profession, it is supposed, been held in higher respect, and exerted so much authority and influence, as in Gaul, Britain, and Ireland.

"Of the honour in which minstrels were held, many instances occur in Ossian. They were ambassadors between contending chiefs; and their profession was held sacred. Cairbor feared to stretch his hand or his sword to the bards, though

his soul was dark. 'Loose the bards (said his brother Cathmore,) they are sons of other times. Their voice shall be heard in other ages, when the kings of Temora have failed,' Ossian 2, 22. They and the Druids, who were the philosophers and priests of those times, whose interests were consolidated in one, were exempted from taxes and military services, even in times of great danger; and when they attended their patrons in the field, to record and celebrate their actions, they had a guard assigned them. At all public assemblies, they were seated next the king, or chieftain, and sometimes above the great officers of state and chief of the nobility. Nor was their profession less lucrative than honorable. Besides the valuable presents which they were in the habit of receiving from patrons, they had estates in land allotted for their support. So great was the veneration which the princes of those times entertained for their poets, and so highly were they delighted with their strains, that they sometimes pardoned even capital offences for a song. We may reasonably suppose, such a profession would be much courted and cultivated. The number of these bards, and minstrels, which are said to have abounded particularly in Ireland, is almost incredible. We often read in the poems of Ossian, of one hundred bards belonging to one prince, singing and playing in concert for his entertainment. Every chief bard, who was called Allah Redan, or doctor in poetry,

was allowed to have thirty bards of inferior note constantly about his person; and every bard of the second rank was allowed a retinue of fifteen poetical disciples."

Notwithstanding the charm which emanated from the strains of the minstrels, which almost captivated the public mind with a miraculous influence, there was undoubtedly mixed up with their conduct a great deal of cruelty, ambition, and licentiousness. But as the gospel spread abroad the light of truth, which shewed the just distinctions of society, and the relations and obligations of mankind towards each other, this influential class was stripped of a great deal of their unnatural power. But this was but partly effected for several centuries in the Christian era. They still remained a distinct order of men, and obtained their living by singing and playing, at the houses of both poor and rich. They were for ages received, with various degrees of hospitality, at the houses of the great, and retained many of the honours bestowed on their predecessors.

When William the Conqueror fought the desperate battle of Hastings, by which he obtained that title, he was accompanied by minstrels, one of whom was named Taillefer, who was distinguished for his courage, as well as for his skill in music. This individual, filled with the enthusiasm of his profession, heated by the conflict of circumstances, began the terrible contest by singing the

celebrated song of Rollo. But the weapons of the enemy dissolved the charm of his music, and he fell in the heart of the battle.

In the reign of Henry III. there was a minstrel of the name of Henry D'Avanches, a Frenchman, who was dignified with the title of Master Henry the Versifier. It is not unlikely that his province embraced the onerous duties of our poet laureat. We find, in 1249, orders on the treasury to pay this Master Henry *one hundred shillings*, probably for a year's salary; and in the same reign, *forty shillings and a pipe of wine to Beatrice his wife.* A writer in the time of Elizabeth, gives a description of one of these minstrels in the following words: "He had about his neck a red ribband suitable to his girdle; his harp, in good grace, depending before him; his wrist tyed to a green lace and hanging by, under the gorget of his gown, a fair flaggon chain, silver, as a squire minstrel of minstrels of Middlesex, that travelled the country unto fair and worshipful men's houses."

We gather from the writings of Chaucer, the father of English poetry, who was born in 1328, that itinerant minstrels were very common in his day. Accordingly, guided by customs then prevalent, all his characters, whether esquires, nuns, monks, friars, or mendicants, are generally gifted with music, both vocal and instrumental.

"It will not be deemed impertinent," says a

writer* of some celebrity, "to observe, that about this period the minstrels were often better paid than the clergy. In this age, as in more enlightened times, the people loved better to be pleased than instructed. During many of the years of Henry VI., particularly in the year 1430, at the annual feast of the fraternity of the Holie Crosse, at Abingdon, a town in Berkshire, twelve priests each received four pence for singing a dirge; and the same number of minstrels were rewarded each with *two shillings and four pence, besides horse-meal and diet.* Some of these minstrels came only from Maydenhithe, or Maidenhead, a town at no great distance, in the same county. In the year 1441, eight priests were hired from Coventry, to assist in celebrating a yearly obit in the church of the neighbouring priory of Maxtake; as were six minstrels, called mimi, belonging to Lord Clinton, who lived in the adjoining castle of Maxtake, to sing, harp, and play in the hall of the monastery during the extraordinary refection allowed to the monk on that anniversary. Two shillings were given to the priests, and *four* to the minstrels; and the latter are said to have supped in *camera picta*, or the painted chamber of the convent, with the

* A Collection of National English Airs, harmonised by Crotch, edited by W. Chappell.

sub-prior, on which occasion the chamberlain furnished eight massive tapers of wax."

So essential an element was music in the composition of any poetical effusion, especially in those times, that we find scarcely any of the works of our old poets without it. Spencer, one of England's choicest poets, born in the year 1553, is by no means scanty in his use of it. He says—

> "Hark how the minstrels 'gin to thrill aloud
> Their merry music that resounds from far,
> The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling crowd,
> That well agree withouten breach or jar."

The ballads, songs, madrigals, and such like poetic effusions, on which was grafted the music, must generally have been printed only upon the memories of the profession, who, of course, would abridge, extend, and alter, as the occasion might demand. And these observations would equally apply to music in its then imperfect state of notation. *Ad libitum variations*, both in *time*, *mode*, *forte*, and *piano*, cannot but have been very prominent characteristics in the management and performance of their music. *Improvisation* also must often have been adopted, to give birth to the sudden inspiration of the musician, especially in the symphonious parts of the performance, many of which would be extravagant enough, and a burlesque on all order and harmony, even of those times.

But we are not to imagine that people, whose

livings and fame depended upon the manner in which they acquitted themselves, and to which public attention was continually directed, with whom competition ever lived in vigour, would be without some government and points of direction, by which they might be able to act in concert. Rude, arbitrary, and local, would those directions be, no doubt; each body of roving minstrels having something peculiar to themselves, not comprehended by others, requiring much practice, and mixed up with dancing, bodily contortions, fantastic decorations, and every species of buffoonery.

We have more than once had occasion to remark on the paucity of musical remains. The relics of bardic compositions are still more scarce. "The most ancient song that has yet been met with, with the music, is one written and composed on the battle of Agincourt. * * * Towards the end of the sixteenth century, this class of men had lost all credit, and were sunk so low in the public opinion, that in the 39th of Elizabeth, a statute was passed, by which minstrels, wandering abroad, were included among rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and were adjudged to be punished as such."*

Although the process of moral and intellectual cultivation which began at the reformation, has uprooted and destroyed many usages of feudal

* London Ency. Art. Minstrel.

times, which, like rank, poisonous weeds, had overrun the land, still it is a work of time to effect their complete extirpation. They are fast running out, however; and the gipsy scenes, mountebank exhibitions, and the feats of fortune-tellers and jugglers, which now and then appear, and attract the attention, and command the admiration of the vulgar crowd, shew what a vast improvement has taken place in the public mind since that period, when it was as common for a gentleman to have a jester to crown his jolly pleasures, as it was for him to have a steward to manage his secular affairs.

In tracing the course of musical science, the eye of the amateur is naturally turned towards Italy, as a reservoir which received the strains that flowed from the heights of Roman, Grecian, and Egyptian attainments, and which, directed by the papal machinery, was again diffused over the different parts of Europe. But, even here, it appears for ages to have been nearly stagnant. Mr. Stafford well observes, that, "little appears to have been done for music, nor is there one musical name of eminence recorded after St. Gregory in the annals of Italian science, till the commencement of the eleventh century."

The most prominent name which next occurs, and to whom music is indebted for its principal improvements, especially in notation, is that of Guido Aretino, who was born at Arezzo in Tus

cany, it is supposed in the year 990 by some writers, by others in the eleventh century, and, strange as it may appear, by others in the thirteenth century. He was chorister in the monastery of the Benedictines at Arezzo; and being much perplexed by the intricacy of the system, and the length of time it took to learn it, he earnestly applied his talents for its improvement. The gleamings of hope broke upon his mind while engaged in singing the hymn of St. John, a composition then having been in use for a considerable time. "His first step was to convert tetrachords into hexachords, in a diatonic ascent from the key note to its sixth; and to these six sounds he applied the syllables *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, the initial syllables of the hymn just mentioned. This process is what is now termed *solmization*. He simplified notation by reducing the number of letters from fifteen to seven; and, instead of placing them at different heights above each other, to denote the elevation or depression of the voice, he wrote them at the commencement of the line, using a note where they were to be repeated. The letters were entirely discontinued for a time, and the points only retained. He was the first that used the intervals between the lines to denote degrees, placing the points in those intervals (or spaces) as well as on the lines themselves. The stave of *five lines*, if not invented by Guido, was simplified and adopted by him to its present

purpose. He also settled the use and distinctions of the clefs, which he placed on the lower, at the head of his staves, representing them by the characters E, C, and F. The first denoted a progression of sounds, from the lowest note in the scale upwards to E; the second series, from F, through B b (which note was first used by him) to D. The notes at this time, and for some time afterward, were all of equal lengths."

Guido extended the method of harmonizing (or, as it was at first called, counter-pointing) then in use. When the organ was first introduced in 577, several combinations of sounds were used, giving the Gregorian chant, or *plain song*, the character of double-chant, afterwards called descant. Musical compositions, soon after that period, bore the significant names of *triple*, *quadruple*, *motet*, *quintet*, and *quartet*. Guido introduced another method of undersinging, or plain song, which consisted in admitting, besides the fourth and the tone, the major and minor third, (the first of which was always considered a discord by the ancients, but which he exalted to a chord) rejecting the semitone and the fifth. The under part might be sung in any of the four intervals with the upper, according to certain rules which he gives.

The fame of Guido was soon spread abroad, and the subject of the improvements he had made in the system and practice of singing engaged the attention of the Vatican itself. Pope John XX.

sent him a flattering invitation to come to Rome, which he accepted, attended by three special messengers, and was received by his Holiness with great pomp and kindness. The professor had brought with him some of his music, arranged according to his new method; and the pope being a practical melodist, he questioned him extensively on its various parts. He tried his practical knowledge on one of Guido's Antiphonies which he had brought with him; and it is said, he would not stir from his seat until he had learned to sing a verse. When he had done, he was astonished at his own performances, and declared he could not have believed in the excellency of the method except he had tried it himself.

In making a stretch downward in history, our attention is arrested by Franchinus, a native of Lodi in Italy, born in 1451. He gave lectures on the science in several of the principal cities of Italy, besides publishing several theoretical works. There appear to have been but few characters then in use, the *maxima*, *long breve*, *semibreve*, and *minim*.

Thomas de Walsingham, an Englishman, who flourished about this time, or soon after, observes, on commenting on the multiplying of musical characters, "Of late a new character has been introduced, called *crotchet*, which would be of no use if musicians would only remember that beyond the minim no subdivision ought to be made."

Alas! for the sober speed of this writer. How would he now be amazed were he to start into life again, and make his *debut* in one of our grand musical festivals, and cast his eye over the dark interminable display of *quavers*, *semi-quavers*, and *demi-semi-quavers*, and listen to the hosts of violins and other light winged instruments taking their airy flight! He would certainly be disposed to indulge the thought, after a little excursion through the country, that musicians not only travelled, but played by *steam*. About one hundred years afterwards, the above divisional signs were adopted, in order to give scope to the quickened pulse of music.

It is not certainly known who was the inventor of that species of composition, styled the *fugue*, nor, indeed, whether it be of Italian, Flemish, German, French, or English origin. It claims no higher antiquity than some time about the close of the fifteenth, or the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Palestrina was an Italian, and is a name of great celebrity. He is said to be the creator of modern church music, and in magnificence and grandeur only equalled by Handel, and a few others of his successors.

Alessandro Scarletti is a favourite with Dr. Burney, who says, "this master genius was truly creative; and I find parts of his property among the stolen goods of all the best composers of the

first forty or fifty years of the eighteenth century."

Corelli established a new school in composition, distinguished for its natural and graceful character. He was the first that brought the *violin* into repute, which after the publication of his works became an object of absorbing interest to all instrumentalists; so much so, that there was scarcely a town in Italy in which some distinguished performer upon it did not reside.

Tartini, one of his pupils, was the first to observe the phenomenon of the third sound, which was in the year 1714, at Venice. "This is a resonance of a third note, when the two upper notes are sounded. Thus, if two parts are sung in thirds, every sensitive ear will feel the impression of a bass or lower part. This may be distinctly heard if a series of consecutive thirds are played on the violin, they being perfectly in tune."

The feeble rays of divine truth which broke from the mind of Wickliff, on a dark and corrupt age, and which increased their radiance, till the deformity and impious domination of the Romish church was broken at the reformation, carried with them some alteration in the *choral service* of the church. A more simplified style of singing was practised by the followers of Wickliff, and which was carried forwards by the Hussites.

With these examples before him, Calvin gave a still greater impulse to dissent from the choral

service of the papish church, with which, on many other accounts it is well known he had but little sympathy. With the assistance of Theodore Beza, he introduced a new version of the psalms, set to music by Guillaume Franco, in one part only. These compositions soon became popular through all the reformed churches.

Martin Luther, from having an ear, no doubt more correctly attuned to melodious sounds than those of the two foregoing celebrated men, and a soul on which devotion ascended more readily on the sublime strains of devotion, retained more of the splendour of the established choral service. He composed many hymns, some of which he himself set to music; specimens of both remain to the present time. The hymn beginning, "Great God what do I see and hear," &c. and the "Old Hundred" tune, are considered, amidst some doubts, to be of the number.

In England many of the reformers disapproved of the secular spirit, and cumbersome ceremonies of the musical part of the church service, and Latimer went so far as to forbid singing of any kind within the limits of his diocese.

Marbeck is supposed to have been the first who set the Cathedral service of the Reformed Church of England. He composed but for one voice, and they were published in 1511. Elizabeth in her direction to the clergy gave particular attention to the music of the church, saying, "Let there be a

modest and distinct song used in all parts of the common prayers of the church; and for the comforting of all such as delight in music, it may be permitted, that, in the beginning and in the end of the common prayer, either morning or evening, there may be sung an hymn, or such like song to the praise of Almighty God." The purity of her motives in this affair are however rendered very questionable; at all events she manifested an arbitrary spirit in the manner in which she sought to supply choristers with singing boys. This is gathered from the Sloane MSS. in the British Museum; an extract from which follows:—"By the Queene Elizabeth R.

"Whereas we have authorysed our servante Thomas Gyles, Mr. of children of the cathedrall churche of St. Paule, within our cittie of London, to take upp such apte and meete children as are most fitt to be instructed and framed in the arte and science of musicke and singinge, as maye be had and found out within anie place of this our realme of England or Wales, to be by his education and bringing up made meete and liable to serve us in that behalf when our pleasure is to call on them." This weak and unjustifiable act of the Queen in tearing those children away from their parents, whom God had blessed with a good ear and voice, but ill accorded with the nature of that work in which they were to be employed.

Among the celebrated writers and performers of

music at this period, was that of Dr. John Bull, to whom tradition ascribes the honour of composing our national air, of "God save the King." This honour, however, has never been unanimously bestowed; and it has lately considerably faded on the Doctor's brow, by information supplied in an elaborate and erudite work on "Old National English Airs," by W. Chappell. Mr. Chappell there shows by considerations of great force, that the author of the anthem was a Henry Carey, then living in London, and who, it may be remarked, was the grandfather of the mother of the late Edmund Kean. Carey was disaffected towards the reigning government, and composed the air on the eve of the insurrection in 1715, in furtherance of the cause of James the pretender, whose name was the burden of its theme. The insurrection failed, and the tune lay dormant till the occurrence of the victory of Admiral Vernon, in 1740, when the author met a party at a tavern, and sang it—substituting the word *George* for *James*, in celebration of the triumph. Dr. Arne harmonized it, and brought it out in Drury Lane Theatre in 1745, with great effect, when another pretender aspired to usurp the British crown. It then took an elevated stand in the musical world, and may be said ever since to have been in growing favour with the public. It is singular that this anthem has greatly served the cause it was intended to destroy. About the year 1743, Carey put an end

to his life, being at the advanced age of eighty years, in abject circumstances, having only a half-penny in his pocket.

But the most noted composer of the seventeenth century, undoubtedly was Henry Purcell, whose genius was rich, clear, and exceedingly versatile. He died at the age of thirty-seven, in the year—some authorities say 1695, and others 1705. He was interred in Westminster Abbey, where he had a monument erected to his memory. His principal works have been published under the title of Orpheus Britannicus.

About this time, and during the beginning of the following century, writers and teachers of music became very numerous; many of them however contributed little but empty names, and useless endeavours. A few were brilliant exceptions.

Dr. Pepusch was one of the greatest theoretic or scientific composers and musicians of modern times. He was born at Berlin in 1667. When not fifteen years old, he was so expert a player on the harpsichord, that he was appointed to teach music to the Prince Royal of Prussia. He came to England in 1700, and taught music in its most comprehensive sense,—the principals of harmony, and the science of composition, and not to children and novices, but to teachers and professors of music themselves. He died at the age of 85 years.

Handel is a name that has become as familiar as household words, not only in cathedrals and

populous towns, but even in village choirs. Who has not heard the name of Handel? Thousands who know nothing of the foundation on which his fame is built, take his name as a symbol of excellence, beyond which it is in vain for any other to aspire. Handel was born at Halle, in the Duchy of Magdenburg, Feb. 24, 1684. At the age of seven he gave the most convincing proofs of his superior musical genius. In less than two years after this he was able to supply the place of his teacher. He had also before this period composed several *motets* for the use of the Church. At ten he wrote many *sonatas*, some of which were in the possession of George III., and are very likely now in the library of our present young Queen. His superior skill awakened the jealousy of his competitors; from one of whom he would have received a mortal wound as he was returning home one night, but for a music book which he had buttoned up in his coat, which received and prevented the further progress of the sword's point.

He visited Hamburg, Rome, and other places where he was received with great applause. In 1710, he visited London, when he was quickly introduced to the court of Queen Anne, and was honoured with significant marks of her royal favour. He spent several years at the Earl of Burlington's, where he was in the habit of meeting Pope the poet, who, though without a particle of musical skill, spoke and wrote of Handel with

great respect. Here he was wholly absorbed with his profession, nor would he allow his attention to be diverted by the fashionable company and pursuits of the great. At Cannons, the seat of the Duke of Chandos, he composed many of his *anthems, concertos, sonatas, lessons,* and *organ fugues.*

His connexion with the Academy of Music, and of which he was the projector, though it added to his fame, brought but little nourishment to his finances. He published his "Messiah" in 1741. The statements concerning its composition, will most likely excite both doubt and admiration. It is reported to have been commenced on the 22nd of August, 1741; the first part of which was finished on the 28th of the same month; the second on the 6th of Sept., and the third on the 12th, and on the 14th it was performed, thus occupying the composer from its beginning to its performance before the public only twenty-one days. The admirers of that magnificent work, will be surprised to learn, that on its first appearance in London, it was very coolly received both as regards its sale and performance. This however will no more surprise the amateur, than it will the lover of poetry, when he is informed, that "Milton's Paradise Lost," would command no higher a price than £15, when first offered for publication.

In old age Handel had the misfortune to lose his sight. This may well be imagined, to have been

to him a distressing circumstance; and also a rather gloomy coincidence between him and the sublime poet just mentioned. "But to have seen Handel led to the organ," says Dr. Burney, "after this calamity, at seventy years of age, and then conducted towards the audience to make his accustomed obeisance, was a sight so truly affecting to persons of sensibility, as greatly diminished their pleasure in hearing him perform." He died on the 13th of April, 1759, and was interred in Westminster Abbey, with due honours; and a monument in the "Poet's corner," has since been erected to his memory.

"As a composer Handel was great in all styles —from the familiar and airy, to the grand and sublime. His instinctive taste for melody, and the high value he set upon it, are obvious in all his works; but he felt no less strongly the charms of harmony, in the fulness and richness of which, he far surpassed even the greatest musicians that preceded him; and had he been able to employ the variety of instruments now in use, some of which have been invented since his death, and to command that orchestral talent, and which probably has had some share in stimulating the inventive faculty of modern composers; it is reasonable to suppose that the field of his conception would have expanded with the means at his command. Unrivalled in sublimity, he might then have

anticipated the variety and brilliance of late masters."*

An anecdote is related of him in Field's "Introduction to Harmony," which forcibly shows the intensity of his attention, and the emotion of his feelings in giving birth to his "immortal strains:" the writer says, "I have heard it related, that when Handel's servant used to bring him his chocolate in a morning, he often stood in silent astonishment (until it was cold) to see his master's tears mixing with the ink, as he penned his divine notes."

Joseph Haydn is a name which invites attention; whose works are often found in connexion with those of Handel. His reputation is elevated, general, and expanding. His genius was deeply and thoroughly saturated with natural simplicity and graceful melody, and never failed to send forth copious streams of pure and powerful harmony. Haydn was born in Bohrau, a town in Lower Austria, 1733. His father was a wheelwright, and placed in such indigent circumstances that he could do nothing towards giving that education to his son, which his musical propensity so powerfully demanded. Young Haydn used to sing to his father's harp, which the latter played without any systematic knowledge of music. With the assistance of a schoolmaster, a relative, he made such

* Distinguished Men, vol. III., p. 198.

progress in his favourite science, as in a short time to enable him to try his voice in the Imperial Choir at Vienna. When his voice changed, he was obliged to resign his situation, and he did not find another for a considerable period; nor had he any certain way of getting a bare subsistence. His accommodations, probably remind the reader of the heritage of many a poor poet. It is said about this time he lodged in the *sixth* story; his room had neither door nor casement; during the most inclement seasons his breath congealed on the bed clothes; and the water which he fetched up from the fountain for his toilet, was frequently changed into ice before he could ascend to the exalted regions of his abode. He gained a partial living by giving lessons, and occasionally performing at orchestras; but his poverty prevented him from appearing to advantage in more polished society. Perhaps his prudence was not the most valuable trait in his character. An old worm-eaten harpsichord is described as his only source of happiness; and with this companion of his adversity he courageously, and for years, composed those strains which were destined to obtain rapturous applause from the musical world. He came to England when he was about forty years of age, where he continued for five years, amidst courtesies and rewards, which formed a striking contrast to the former part of his life.

His principal works, besides a great number

of symphonies, are his *Creation*, and *Seasons*. Haydn was a passionate admirer of Handel, styling him the father of music. It is said, that if Haydn had not admired Handel, he would never have composed his *Creation*.

While ruminating among the master spirits of musical science which Germany has produced, it is not unlikely the reader may have anticipated the character of Mozart. His names are numerous, and variously given by different writers. John Chrysostom Walfgang Theophilus Mozart, was born at Saltzburg, on January 26th, 1756. The rays of musical genius in him, were nearly contemporary with the dawn of reason. His precocious love of music discovered itself, by an exquisite perception of harmonic combinations. It afforded him great pleasure to seek out *thirds* on the harpsichord, and he would be in raptures when he found one of those harmonious chords. This he attempted ere he had reached his third year, on his sister's instrument, who was four years older than himself. His father, who was a tolerable musician, perceiving his capabilities, began to teach him some little airs, and soon saw him improve beyond his expectations. At the age of *four*, half an hour was generally sufficient for him to learn a minuet or song, and when once learned he would perform with taste and expression. At six he had made such progress as to be able to compose short pieces for the harpsichord. His father returning home

one day with a stranger, found the little fellow with a pen in his hand. "What are you writing?" said the father, "A concerto for the harpsichord," replied the child. "Let us see it," rejoined the father, "it is a marvellous concerto without doubt." He then took the paper, and saw nothing at first but a mass of notes, mingled with blots of ink by the bad management of the pen; having blotted and smeared his paper, he had endeavoured to mark out his ideas with his fingers. On a more minute inspection the father was lost in wonder, and his eyes delighted and overflowing with tears, became rivetted to the notes. "Sir," exclaimed he to the stranger, "how just and regular it all is! but it is impossible to play it, it is too difficult" "It is a concerto," said the child, "and must be practised till we *can* play it." About this period he went with his father and sister to Munich, where he performed to the admiration of the whole court. His extraordinary musical achievements reached the ears of the empress, and brought him to Vienna, when she used to place him on her knee while he played on the harpsichord.

The family made an extensive tour, giving concerts in the various cities through which they passed. In Paris they continued five months, and from thence proceeded to London, where he performed before the royal family with great applause. So much interest did he excite in London, that the Hon. Daines Barrington drew up an account of his

wonderful performances, which was read before the Royal Society, and published in the philosophical transactions. The writer says, "I carried to him a manuscript duet which was composed by an English gentleman. The whole score was in five parts, viz., accompaniments for a first and second violin, the two vocal parts, and a bass. The parts for the voices were written in the counter-tenor clef. My intention in carrying with me this manuscript composition, was to have an irrefragable proof of his abilities as a player at *sight*, it being absolutely impossible that he could ever have seen the music before.

The score was no sooner put upon his desk, than he began playing the symphony in a most masterly manner, as well in the time and style, which corresponded with the intention of the composer. I mention these particulars because the greatest masters often fail in the first trial.

His voice in the tone of it was thin and infantine, but nothing could exceed the masterly manner in which he sung. His father, who performed the under part in the duet, was once or twice out, though the passages were not more difficult than those in the upper one; on which occasion the son looked with some anger, pointing out to him some mistakes, and setting him right. This with several other extemporaneous performances he made before he was *eight years* of age. About the same time he wrote his *Sinfonia*, which was

fitted up with all the instruments, not omitting drums and trumpets. To his sister, who sat near him while he was writing, he said, "remind me that I give the horns something good to do."

Mozart's genius was pleasingly diversified, and continually embued with the freshness of originality. "He excelled in all styles, from the symphony to the dance, from operas to the most simple ballad." He enlarged the sphere and influence of wind instruments, and gave to the bass part a firmness and sweetness of command which it had not previously possessed. His career was brilliant but short. His constitution was feeble, and his health delicate. His chief legacy was his fame; his funds being scarcely sufficient to keep his widow from penury.

An interesting anecdote, wearing the appearance of truth, has been pretty freely related of Mozart, which his admirers will be glad to see here. One day, while the languishing composer was taking a little rest, he was apprized that a stranger wished to speak with him. The stranger was admitted; and after suitable introductions, with an imposing air, said, "I am come to request a favour of you. A friend, whose name I am requested not to mention, wishes to have a solemn mass composed, as a requiem for the soul of a dear relative, recently lost, whose memory he is desirous of honouring in an especial manner. You alone he conceives have the power of executing it worthily, and I am here

and even in the notices already given, there is necessarily such an abruptness in biographical relation, and such a want of delineation of character, as to make them as unsatisfactory to the writer, as they are unworthy the persons of whom they treat.

Leedwing Von Beethoven was born at Bonn, on the 17th of December, 1770, where his father was tenor singer in the chapel of the Elector. His grandfather was also a musician, and distinguished himself as a composer. His first instructor on the pianoforte was an ingenious man of the name of Pfeiffer. His instructions on the violin, on which however he was never deemed eminent, he obtained from the elder Ries, the father of his distinguished pupil; and on the organ he was taught by the court organist, Van der Eder. When but a very youth he was called upon to give lessons in music to persons of distinction. When between fourteen and fifteen years of age, he was nominated by the Elector Max Franz, brother of the Emperor Joseph II., as supernumerary organist in his chapel, an office honourable for so young a musician, but affording only a scanty emolument.

The strength, comprehension, and daring of his genius, even in youth, is strikingly illustrated in the following anecdote. "It is usual in Catholic choirs, to sing, during passion-week, the lamentations of Jeremiah. These consist, as every one knows, of short passages of four or six lines, which

it was customary to chant in a kind of plain song, yet with a certain observance of rhythm; the chant consisted of four successive notes, on one of which the singer was to pause, while the accompanist (the organ being disused during passion-week) executed a passage or voluntary on the harpsichord. This service falling one day to Beethoven, he asked the singer Heller, who prided himself greatly on his science, if he might try to put him out; which he undertook so to do, that the singer should neither detect him, nor be able to recover himself when once led astray. The challenge was accepted; and at a suitable place, by a cunning deviation from the proper key, still continuing to strike the true key-note, he completely puzzled the singer; who, after in vain trying to recover the key, was forced at last to come to a full stop, amidst the mirth of the bystanders in the choir. Heller was greatly incensed, and made a formal complaint to the Elector, who reproved his young organist with good humour, and forbade him to execute any more *strokes of genius* of this kind." Mozart had heard of his achievements, and gave his opinion of his power by saying, "This is a youth who will make the world hear of him before long."

He obtained leave and some financial assistance of the Elector to visit Vienna, in order to improve himself in the science. When he arrived there, he was so struck with the display of musical talent, and the unexpected facilities of improvement, that

he at once said, "Here will I abide, nor return to Bonn, even were the Elector to withdraw his support and leave me pennyless. He had the honourable advantage of being a pupil of Haydn while at Vienna; the benefit of which however did not prove to be so great, from some reason or another, as he had been led to expect. As Beethoven was one day coming with his bundle of music from Haydn's lessons, he was met by Schenck a friend of his, and a profound musician, who cast his eye over the exercises, and detected many faults which Haydn had suffered to pass unnoticed, although he had professed to correct the compositions. This led to more examination, and to the discovery of similar oversights in all his former exercises; which aroused the suspicions of the pupil." After this he studied composition under the celebrated Albrechtsberger, and soon acquired enough of the science as to need no further assistance. Although he excelled on other instruments, yet his greatest attraction was on the organ. From a celebrated performer he found an easy ascent to a first-rate composer; in which character he has been and will be most distinguished.

Beethoven was an industrious writer, and made considerable additions to the stores of the musical world. His fame arose with his industry; and demands were continually making on his powers of composition, which yielded a somewhat regular supply. Many of his compositions were produced

under two disadvantages: one was that of extreme hardness of hearing, which prevented him, of course, from reaping the full benefit of a trial of his pieces, and obliged him to hear through his *sight;* and the other was not at all uncommon to superior mental endowments, of having principally, and especially in the latter part of his life, *poverty for his companion.* With regard to the former, it was asserted by him as being the *real* cause of his absence *from* company, as well as *in* company, but which was generally attributed to an unsocial disposition. It distressed him greatly when he could not hear every part of a musical performance, especially when others seemed to enjoy it. Such was the point of desperation to which this distressing feeling was carried, that he declared nothing but his attachment to his *art,* prevented him from laying violent hands upon himself. In a document which he wrote during an alarming illness in 1802, when he had but small hopes of recovery, he dwells upon this malady in very forcible and touching language. We cannot, however, but think, that an ambition of general superiority and mistaken notions of the dignity of character, were at the root of his distress; for he avows he could not bear to say in company, "Speak louder—shout, for I am deaf." His resources were much drained, for a number of years, by two inconsiderate brothers, and later in life, by a profligate nephew. He fell into the strain,

adopted by many a superior mind in affliction, that he was neglected. In some instances, such appears to have been clearly the fact, to the disgrace of the parties concerned, not exempting royal blood. His financial difficulties increased as his end drew near; in the year before he died, "he bethought him of the former offers of the London Philharmonic Society, and addressed to them, through Moschelles, a request, that they would fulfil the design of a concert for his benefit, promising to write a new symphony in return for this favour, as soon as his state permitted. The conduct of the English musicians on this occasion, was both liberal and delicate. They at once requested his acceptance of £100, offering to send more if required, with expressions that bespoke their respect and sympathy for the great composer. Some German writers have complained of the current version respecting this gift. They say that Beethoven did not want alms; or, had he needed them, his own countrymen would have been proud to afford them. But the facts are as stated above."*

Beethoven was a voluminous composer, especially in the instrumental department. He is considered peculiarly happy in the adaptation of the music to the words; in that connexion often bringing out striking passages, mingled with much sweetness and tenderness of feeling. He was, moreover, a

* See Tait's Mag, January, 1840.

bold composer; thereby often exciting the fears of his friends, and the censures of his rivals. Through the whole of his works there is a confidence, and buoyancy of spirit which makes him, in whatever direction he takes, an instructive and fascinating companion. There is, perhaps, more uniformity in his works than in those of his principal predecessors and contemporaries; no one effort rising so conspicuously in merit above the rest, except it should be his "Mount of Olives," as to make it the royal residence of his fame. The following characteristic notice of him, by Schindler, his principal biographer, will be interesting to the reader. "His head was unusually large, overgrown with long, matted, grizzled hair, which was rarely smoothed, and gave him rather a wild look, especially (which was not seldom the case) when his beard had grown very long. His brow was lofty and expanded, his eyes brown and small, and when he laughed, quite buried in his head; on the other hand, they started out to an unusual size, and either rolled darting around, the pupil generally turning upward, or more immovably fixed, whenever an idea had seized upon him. At such moments, his exterior at once underwent a striking alteration, and assumed a visibly inspired and commanding aspect, which, to the bystander, made his short figure appear as gigantic as his mind. Such moments of sudden inspiration often surprised him in the midst of society, or while pacing through

the streets; and generally attracted the eager notice of all near him." From his pupil, Ries, we are told, "that he was awkward and ungraceful in his gestures; seldom took any thing into his hand, that was brittle, that he did not break; would frequently upset his inkstand into the pianoforte; tumbled, soiled, and damaged his furniture. And, in short, did every thing that a tidy person ought not to do. How he accomplished the task of shaving himself was always a mystery; but his wounded chin bore frequent witness to the risk he ran in the process." He died at Vienna on the 26th of March, 1827, in the 58th year of his age.

We shall take leave of our German friends in concluding this chapter, and shall begin the next with an attention to home. Indeed, characters which we have just been contemplating, may be said to be in great part English; for although Germany gave them birth, England became their affectionate *foster-mother;* and here they found kindred spirits, which cheerfully aided their brilliant career. In our wealthy metropolis especially, they at once met with a stimulus and a reward for their efforts, for which they might elsewhere have looked in vain.

CHAPTER VI.

The influence of Musical Festivals—Madrigal Society—Philharmonic Concerts—Society for Decayed Musicians—effect of the Cromwellian Revolution on Music—effects of the Restoration on Music—Dr. Crighton and others referred to—notices of Dr. Green, Dr. Boyce, Sir John Hawkins, Dr. Arnold, Dr. Burney, Charles Wesley, Samuel Wesley, James Leach, Dr. Miller, W. Edward Miller, Samuel Stanley, Will Matthews, and Marmaduke Miller.

We do not find any essential improvement in the theory of music during the last century; though its principles have been amazingly developed by the energy of genius in every possible species of composition. It must be observable, however, that this has been mainly affected in the *dramatic*, or *secular* department. For in the metropolis and large towns, there are always a considerable portion of the community, who eagerly repair to places where music is the principal attraction. Hence, ample remuneration is cheerfully given to superior merit, whether as composers or performers, while the candidates for public favour engage in incessant competition, each anxious to extend and embellish the art.

The public festivals, some of which have for a number of years been established, having generally a benevolent object, have drawn together the ablest

performers, both vocal and instrumental, in Europe. On some occasions the receipts have exceeded £20,000; but in consequence of the large sums paid to the principal performers, the net profits arising to the charity, have not reached half that sum. At the York festival in 1812, the astonishing number of 618 performers were engaged.

The *Madrigal* society was formed in 1741, the object of which was to stimulate *glee* compositions, which is said to have produced specimens superior to any of that class in Europe. The *Concerts* of *Ancient* music, were begun under the patronage of the Earl of Sandwich, and Josiah Bates, Esquire. Its object, agreeable with its title, was to keep alive the works of the great masters of the art. The assumption of its members, was, that while invention under the direction of genuine musical talent might make valuable accessions to its treasures, yet that the rage for composition often effects palpable innovations; or adds variety for the sake of difference, and embellishments which only please the novice, and fade with the hour that gives them birth. It was a rule with the society, not to admit any piece that had been composed within the last twenty years. So that its pieces might be supposed to have passed the test of time, and bore on their characters the signet of sterling merit. The band and singers have always been of the highest order; which has had the effect of preserving the pure traditional style of singing and

playing the music of the great masters of the science.

"The *Philharmonic concerts* were established in 1812, at a meeting held at the house of Mr. Dance, at which only that gentleman, Mr. J. B. Cramer, and Signor Corri, were present. The object of this institution is, to promote the excellence of instrumental performance; and in this the efforts of its directors have been most successful. They have a band, which is not equalled in Europe; and nothing has contributed more to promote our taste for instrumental music, than the example set by the members of this society."*

There are the *society* for *decayed musicians* and their *families*, *professional concerts*, and numerous other musical institutions, on a national and limited scale, which it does not seem necessary for us here to mention. A notice of a few of the most distinguished composers of sacred music may not be inapposite.

But we may first remark, that the revolution effected by Cromwell, had a depressing influence upon the fine arts; a full share of which fell upon the whole soul of church music. Indeed this might be expected, from its being so conspicuously incorporated in the ceremonies of a church, so obnoxious in the sight of the revolutionist party. Simplicity in its most naked form, was the order of

* Stafford.

the day; and to embellish was to sin. A writer in describing this alteration, uses the following sweeping expressions: "Nothing but syllabic and unisonous psalmody was authorised, or even permitted in the church. The organs were taken down; organists and choirmen reduced to beggary; and the art of music, and indeed all the arts, but those of killing, canting, and hypocrisy, discountenanced, if not proscribed."*

The accession of the second Charles to the throne renovated the spirit of music, and brought back the organists, and others of the profession into the service of the church. But he did not relish the character of the sacred music then being sung; and the composers under his attraction, produced a more spirited and elegant species, somewhat resembling the French. "In this reign, the violin first came into general use in England. About two years before the Restoration, Thomas Baltre, a native of Lubeck, first taught the art of shifting, and using double stops on the instrument. He was made master of Charles's band of twenty-four violins, which that monarch kept in imitation of the French king; and was succeeded by John Banister, who was the first violinist of any note."† But in 1780, an Italian, of the name of Nicola Matteis, came to England, and very much surpassed

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* Burgh's Anecdotes, vol. II., p. 155.

† Const. Miss., vol. LII., p. 306.

him, and any other that had ever been heard on the violin before; as the honourable Mr. North, in his Memoirs of Music, expresses himself, "every stroke of his bow was a mouthful."

Robert Crighton, D.D., united the study of music to that of divinity with great success. He accompanied Charles II. into his exile, and mitigated the evils of adversity by the pleasures of music. His principal composition is, "I will arise, and go to my father," &c., which is admired, and performed in the Cathedrals to this day. He died in 1726, aged 78 years. Dr. Aldrich had considerable taste as a musician; he composed many services, and about twenty anthems for the church. The names of Clarke, Hine, Hall, Heldon, Piggott, Tudway, Richardson, Turner, Croft, Hustridge, Isham, Hesletine, and Reading, are names familiar with the sacred music of those times. Dr. Greene is well known both as a performer, and composer of music. He was brought up in the choir of St. Paul's, and on the death of Brind, his master, to whom he had been apprenticed, became organist. In the latter years of his life, he engaged in the difficult and laborious task of collecting the services and anthems of the old church composers, which were used and known but in single parts in the different cathedrals of the kingdom, in order to correct and publish them in score. But death closed his life in 1755, ere he had finished his work; and it was completed by Dr. Boyce, his

pupil and successor, to whom he had bequeathed the materials for the undertaking. This distinguished writer (Dr. Boyce) had the misfortune of being afflicted with an incurable deafness, which at one time rendered him almost insensible of sound. His works are much valued; and Dr. Burney says, in them there is "strength, clearness, and facility, without any mixture of styles or ornament." He died 1779, aged 68 years. Sir John Hawkins, so well known in the history of literature, and as the friend and coadjutor of Dr. Johnson, devoted his attention to music. He is not known as a composer, but as a writer of the "History of Music." This work took him sixteen years in accomplishing; it was printed in five quarto volumes, and presented by him personally to the king. It is said he was under great obligations to the library of Dr. Pepuch. He died in 1789, aged 70 years. Dr. Arnold received his musical education from Mr. Gates and Dr. Nares, both eminent musicians. His compositions are both sacred and secular; in both of which species he has obtained enduring fame. His "Prodigal Son" was the most popular on its introduction to the public, for which he was honoured, by being made Doctor of Music. On the death of Dr. Nares he was appointed organist and composer to the Chapel Royal. He died in 1802, and was interred in Westminster Abbey. Charles Burney (Mus. Dr.) was born at Shrewsbury, in 1726. He very early showed an

intense love for music, which was ably fostered, under the tuition of Mr. Baker, organist of the cathedral. When about twenty years of age, he placed himself under the direction of Dr. Arne, with whom he continued three years. About this time he composed several pieces for Drury Lane; but speedily turned his attention to the getting up of his "General History of Music;" a work by which he will always be best known, especially by those who aspire to a more correct knowledge of the theory and progress of the science. It was published in four volumes. He travelled over a great part of the continent to collect materials for the work, which occupied him nine years, during which time he never visited his native country. This history is deservedly considered a high authority on the subjects on which it treats, and will not easily be superseded by any similar production. He wrote several other valuable works on the science, in the elucidation of which, indeed, he spent his whole life. He contributed the articles on music, in Rees's Cyclopedia. Some of his numerous family have distinguished themselves by their literary productions; his eldest son, James, was the companion of Captain Cook, in his voyage round the world.

Some notice of the musical character of Charles Wesley, will very naturally be expected here. It is likely the very name of Wesley will act as a charm to thousands, and dispose such readers to

receive with eagerness, any favourable statements regarding one who was an immediate descendent of one of the founders of Methodism.

Charles Wesley was the eldest son of Charles Wesley, emphatically styled the "Bard of Methodism," and nephew of John Wesley, the principal founder of the sect. Had circumstances been equally favourable, Charles, and Samuel Wesley, would have been as much and generally distinguished for their musical compositions and performances, as their father is, for the numerous and invaluable hymns which he has furnished for the use of the Methodists.

In giving a brief and accurate description of the musical capabilities of Charles Wesley, we cannot do better than take his father's account, especially as regards his infancy and youth, which was published to the world by the honourable Daines Barrington, a writer whom we have had occasion before to notice, who has rendered himself celebrated, by collecting and publishing rare instances of genius. It was published in his "Miscellanies," in the year 1781.

"Charles was born at Bristol, December 11th, 1757. He was two years and three quarters old when I first observed his strong inclination to music. He then surprised me by playing a tune on the harpsichord, readily, and in just time. Soon after, he played several, whatever his mother sung, or whatever he heard in the streets.

"From his birth she used to quiet and amuse him with the harpsichord; but he would not suffer her to play with one hand only, taking the other and putting it on the keys, before he could speak. When he played himself, she used to tie him up by his back-strings to the chair, for fear of his falling. Whatever tune it was, he always put a true bass to it. From the beginning he always played without study or hesitation; and, as the masters told me, perfectly well.

"Mr. Broderip, organist of Bristol, heard him in petticoats, and foretold he would one day make a great player.

"When he was called to play to a stranger, he would ask in a word of his own, 'Is he a musicker?' and if answered, 'yes,' he played with the greatest readiness.

"He always played *con spirito*. There was something in his manner above a child, which struck the hearers, learned or unlearned.

"At four years old I carried him with me to London. Mr. Beard was the first that confirmed Mr. Broderip's judgment of him, and kindly offered his interest with Dr. Boyce, to get him admitted among the king's boys. But I had no thought then of bringing him up a musician.

"A gentlemen carried him next to Mr. Stanley, who expressed much pleasure and surprise at hearing him, and declared he had never met with one of his age, with so strong a propensity to music.

The gentleman told us, he never before believed what Handel used to tell of himself, and his own love of music in his childhood.

"Mr. Madan presented my son to Mr. Morgan, who was extremely kind; and, as I then thought, partial to him. He told us, he would prove an eminent master, if he was not taken off by other studies. Mr. Morgan frequently entertained him with the harpsichord. Charles was greatly taken with his bold, full manner of playing, and seemed even then to catch a spark of his fire.

"At our return to Bristol, we left him to ramble on till he was near six; then we gave him to Mr. Rooke for a master; a man of no name, but very good natured, who let him run on *ad libitum*, whilst he sat by, more to observe, than to control him.

"Mr. Rogers, the oldest organist in Bristol, was one of his first friends. He often set him on his knee, and made him play to him, declaring that he was more delighted in hearing him play than himself."

Such is the account furnished by the Rev. Charles Wesley of the love, taste, and aptitude which his son manifested for music, in his early years; statements which might stagger belief, were they not supported by other evidence, and by similar achievements of other performers on record. This inate attachment to the science, continued to be developed with increasing perfection and

attractions in the following years. Indeed, "So perfectly was his mind absorbed in music, that he seemed incapable, through the greater part of his life, of directing his undivided attention to any other subject. During his boyhood he received the rudiments of a classical education under the tuition of his father; but he was only able to learn his Latin grammar by setting his lessons to music."

It does not appear that Charles Wesley ever devoted much time or attention to composition. It was as a performer of the sublimest pieces of our great masters on the organ, that he chiefly excelled.

Mr. Wesley's powers of memory were prodigious. He was perfectly familiar with the whole of Handel's music, as well as with the most admired compositions of other eminent men, and scarcely ever had occasion to make the slightest reference to his notes. This gave him a great advantage as a performer. It is said that king George the fourth when once at Brighton, asked one of his musicians to play a particular piece, who apologized for his inability to fulfil the royal command, saying, that he had not the book with him. The king replied, in a tone of mortification, "Mr. Wesley never wants a book. He can play from memory every thing that I request, after a few moments of recollection."

"King George the third is well known to have been very fond of music, particularly that of

Handel; and as Mr. Charles Wesley excelled almost every other man in playing the compositions of that great master, he became a special favourite with his Majesty, and received many marks of favour from him, and from other members of his family. At one time he offered himself as a candidate for the vacant situation of organist at St. Paul's Cathedral; when he met with a painful repulse. On appearing before the Ecclesiastics, with whom the appointment lay, and presenting his claims to their confidence, they said to him with less civility than decision, 'We want no Wesleys here.' The king heard of this unseemly act, and was deeply grieved. He sent for the obnoxious organist to Windsor, and expressed his strong regret that he should have been refused in such a manner, and for such a reason; adding, with his characteristic frankness and generosity, 'Never mind, the name of Wesley is always welcome to me.' After the king had lost his sight, Mr. Wesley was one day with his Majesty alone, when the venerable monarch said, 'Mr. Wesley, is there any body in the room but you and me?' 'No, your majesty,' was the reply. The king then declared his persuasion that Mr. Wesley's father and uncle, with Mr. Whitefield and Lady Huntingdon, had done more to promote the spread of true religion in the country, than the entire body of dignified clergy, who were so apt to despise their labours."

"Mr. Wesley was once dining with a venerable prelate, remarkable for his theological learning, and the real ability with which he has defended the principles of Protestant Christianity. In the company was a young clergyman, who seemed desirous of attracting attention by the avowal of his partialities as a minister of the Established Church. 'My Lord,' said he, addressing the bishop, 'when I was passing through ——, I saw a man preaching to a crowd of people in the open air. I suppose he was one of John Wesley's itinerants.' 'Did you stop to hear him?' rejoined the bishop. 'O no!' said the clergyman, 'I did not suppose that he could say any thing worth hearing.' The bishop effectually ended the conversation by saying, 'I should think you were very much mistaken, Mr. ——. It is very probable that that man preached a better sermon than either you or I could have done. Do you know, sir, that this gentleman,' pointing to Mr. Wesely, 'is John Wesley's nephew?'"

"Mr Charles Wesley was never married; but in early youth he formed an attachment to an amiable girl of inferior birth. This was strongly opposed by his mother and her family, who mentioned the subject, with much concern, to his uncle, Mr. John Wesley. Finding that this was the chief objection, the venerable founder of Methodism, who was superior to every feeling of this kind, said, 'Then there is no family blood? I hear the

girl is good, but of no family?' 'Nor fortune either,' said the mother of poor Charles. Mr. John Wesley made no reply; but sent his nephew fifty pounds as a wedding present; and there is reason to believe he sincerely regretted that the youth was ultimately crossed in his inclination."

"After Mr. Wesley was deprived of his parents, he lived with his sister to the period of her death in the year 1828; and indeed he greatly needed the care of such a friend. He presented in his character several of the eccentricities of genius; and through the whole of his life, seldom succeeded in dressing himself, so as not to disturb the gravity of strangers who might happen to see him, unless he was assisted by some friendly hand in the adjustment of his wig and apparel. His sister, the late Miss Wesley, was a lady of a most elegant and cultivated mind; and for many years, in a great measure, supported the family by the productions of her pen, although she was not in the habit of connecting her name with her productions. For a considerable time she wrote under the direction of the late Dr. Gregory; and there is reason to believe that some of the works which bear his name were her compositions. She and her brother were both below the middle stature. Neither of them had any extraordinary partiality for modern fashions; and when they walked abroad together in London, as they frequently did, their singular and antique appearance attracted the attention of

many a passenger, who seemed to regard them as the relics of a former age, without being aware of the peculiarities of mind by which they were both distinguished."*

Some reference to the character of Samuel Wesley, in connexion with that of his brother Charles, will doubtles be acceptable to the reader; indeed, there is something so remarkable in the case, as to fix the attention, and excite the wonder, even of those who are familiar with the prodigies of genius. To produce one such character in an age, would be to the credit of a nation. But that family must be signally honoured, and those honours widely spread, and perpetuated, which at the same time furnishes two such brilliant characters. The designatory remark is trite enough, of "musical families." And it is often easy to trace from one prominent spring, the streams of music running into the near and remote branches of a family; and to identify by their peculiar qualities their connexion with the source. But it has seldom happened that in one family, in such close alliance, have sprung up two fountains, so as to gratify the most fastidious taste of the most eminent professors of the art.

There was a rather remarkable coincidence in the birth of Samuel Wesley with that of Handel. Samuel Wesley was born on the 24th of February, 1766, the same day of the month that gave birth to

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* See Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, p. 514.

Handel eighty-two years before. The accounts of his early achievements have been chiefly furnished by his father, the Rev. Charles Wesley, and supported, and afterwards carried out, by other numerous and distinguished authorities. One account says, that he was three years old before he "aimed at a tune," which was that of, "God save great George our King," and which he had learned from the street organs.

As his brother Charles was something more than eight years older than he, the former would of course have made considerable progress, when the latter was but in the initials of the science. It is very natural to suppose that Samuel would have an advantage which Charles had not, in having the practice of the latter frequently before him. And it appears he was nothing backward in turning that circumstance to his profit. When his brother Charles was practising, he would seize his childish fiddle, and scrape, and beat time, with all the emulation of an accomplished rival. And whenever the tutor came to teach his brother on the harpsichord, he would be sure to be there, and accompany Charles; the *chair* being his instrument. And this he would do, under the occasional frown and chiding of the preceptor. "And when he did not *see* the harpsichord, he crossed his hands on the *chair*, as the other did on the instrument, without ever missing a time. He was so exceedingly fond of Scarlotti's music, that if ever Charles

began playing his lessons before he was called, he would cry and roar as if he had been beaten. Mr. Madan, his godfather, finding him one day so belabouring the chair, told him he should have a better instrument by and by." And the enthusiasm that he manifested in learning the art, soon discovered itself in instituting comparisons between his performance and that of his brother. His father observes, "He would some times presume to find fault with his (his brother's) playing, when we thought he could know nothing of the matter."

"He was between four and five years old when he got hold of the Oratorio of Samson; and by that alone taught himself to read words; soon after he taught himself to write. From this time he sprung up like a mushroom; and when turned of five could read perfectly well; and had all the airs, recitations, and choruses of Samson and the Messiah, both words and notes, by heart. Before he could write he composed much music. His custom was, to lay the words of an Oratorio before him and sing them over. Thus he set (extempore for the most part) Ruth, Gideon, Manasses, and the Death of Abel. The airs of Ruth in particular, he made before he was six years old, and laid them up in his memory till he was eight, and then wrote them down.

Samuel was a great favourite with the celebrated Dr. Boyce, from whom he received especial notice and encouragement. Shortly after the commence-

ment of their acquaintance, the youth began to show the Doctor his compositions, which always excited his surprise, and led him on one occasion to say to his father, "There is no man in England has two such sons." As soon as Samuel had finished his Oratorio on Ruth, he sent it as a present to the Doctor, who immediately honoured him with the following note: "Dr. Boyce's compliments to his very ingenious brother composer, Mr. Samuel Wesley, and is very much pleased and obliged by the possession of the Oratorio of Ruth, which he shall preserve with the utmost care, as the most curious product of his musical library." His compositions were numerous and varied; and as a performer on the violin, harpsichord, and organ, he was unquestionably at the head of his profession.

"But his celebrity was, and is, greater on the continent than in his native country. His compositions are grand and masterly; his melodies sweet, varied, and novel; his harmony bold, imposing, unexpected, and sublime. His resources were boundless, and if called upon to extemporize for half a dozen times in the course of the evening, each fantasia was new, fresh, and perfectly unlike the others." When he was a youth he drew numbers of the most distinguished professors of music to witness his achievements at his father's house; and he could with perfect ease entertain companies so composed for hours on his own music. On one

of these occasions a celebrated individual exclaimed, "Inspiration! Inspiration!" And another declared he had got that which they were all seeking for.

"Whatever was presented to him he played at sight, and made variations on any tune; and often as he played it again made new variations. He imitated every author's style, whether Handel, Bach, Schoberl, or Scarlotti himself."

It is said, that, "If he loved any thing better than music, it was regularity. Nothing could exceed his punctuality. He took to it himself. No company, no persuasions, could keep him up beyond his time. He never could be prevailed upon to hear opera or concert by night. The moment the clock gave warning for eight, away ran Sam, in the midst of his most favourite music. Once he rose up after the first part of the Messiah, with, 'Come, mamma, let us go home, or I sha'nt be in bed by eight.' When some talked of carrying him to the queen, and I" (says his father) "asked him if he was willing to go, 'Yes, with all my heart,' he answered, 'but I wont stay beyond eight.'"

"An anecdote is given of him by the honourable Daines Barrington, which at once shows the aptness of his powers of composition, and his critical perception of the analysis of music. He was desired to compose a march for one of the regiments of guards; which he did to the approba-

tion of all that ever heard it; and a distinguished officer of the royal navy declared, that it was a movement which would probably impart steady and serene courage when the enemy was approaching. As I thought the boy would like to hear this march performed, I carried him to the parade at the proper time, when it had the honour of beginning the military concert. The piece being finished, I asked him whether it was executed to his satisfaction? to which he answered, 'by no means.' I then immediately introduced him to the band, (which consisted of very tall and stout musicians,) that he might set them right. On this Sam said to them, 'You have not done justice to my compositions.' To which they answered the urchin with both astonishment and contempt, 'To your composition!' Sam, however, replied with great serenity, 'Yes, my composition.' Which I confirmed. They then stared, and severally made their excuses, by protesting that they had copied accurately from the manuscript which had been put into their hands. This he most readily allowed to the hautboys and bassoons, but said that it was the French horns that were in fault; who making the same defence, he insisted upon the original score being produced, and, showing them their mistake, ordered the march to be played again; which they submitted to, with as much deference as they would have shown to Handel."

It will not be an unwelcome digression to

observe, that, "His love of polite literature was almost, if not quite, as enthusiastic as his affection for music. At no period of his life (so far as the writer of this note is aware) did he entirely discontinue the perusal of his favourite classics. His keen relish for wit attached him particularly to the satirical writers. He had Juvenal almost by heart, and in Lucian there are but few passages which he could not have recognized. He possessed not only the accomplishment of composing in Latin with considerable propriety and neatness, but could express himself orally in that language, with a promptitude not common even among professed scholars. He was an indefatigable pedestrian, and it was his custom, during the greater part of his life, to read as he walked. His books were much under scored, and abounded with pithy marginal annotations. The quantity of authors, both English and foreign, with whom he thus became acquainted, was immense. An instance of his tenacious regard for literature evinced itself within a few days of his death. On shaking hands with his second son, who was taking leave of him, after a call, 'God bless you, Jack,' exclaimed he, 'stick to your Latin. Remember the Wesleys were always gentlemen and scholars.'"

"Mr. Wesley was remarkable for great energy, firmness of mind, freedom from envy, penetration, docility, approaching almost to infantine simplicity, and unvarying adherence to truth. These charac-

teristics were united to a singleness of heart, which exceeded, if possible, that which marked his uncle, the celebrated John Wesley. His passions were exceedingly strong, and from a habit of always speaking his mind, and his having no idea of management or the *finesse* of human life, he too often, by the brilliancy of his wit, or the bitterness of his sarcasms, unthinkingly caused estrangements, if not raised up an enemy. His conversation was rich, copious, and fascinating; no subject could be started which he could not adorn by shrewd remarks, or illustrate by some appropriate and original anecdote.

His prospects in life were unfortunately clouded by a dreadful accident, which befel him in the year 1800. Returning home one evening from a visit to an intimate friend, (one of the oldest members of the Madrigal Society,) in passing along Snow-hill, he fell into a deep excavation, which had been prepared for the foundation of a building. There he lay insensible, till day-light disclosed his situation, and he was conveyed home. His head had received a most serious injury, and the medical attendants wished to perform the operation of trepanning; but Wesley obstinately refused his consent, and the wound was permitted to heal. This he ever afterwards regretted, for it is supposed that in consequence of some portion of the skull adhering to, or pressing upon, the brain, those periodical states of high nervous irritability

originated, which subsequently checked, and darkened the splendour of his career."

This affliction for several years rendered him incapable of paying much attention to his favourite art. But in time his malady abated, and his mental powers rallied; when in 1815, on a journey to Norwich, to conduct an oratorio, he sunk into mental despondency, and for seven years retired from public life, endeavouring to find relief in public worship, and living with the austerity of a hermit. In 1823 he recovered, and up to 1830 composed many excellent pieces, and was engaged frequently in public performances on the organ. For a month previous to his death, he was sinking under the accumulating force of his disorder. His last moments were engaged in imploring the blessing of the Almighty on his children, and he expired in the effort of bidding them an affectionate farewell, on Wednesday afternoon, October 11th, 1837, in the seventy-second year of his age.

In the morning of the Tuesday following, the remains of the celebrated musician were committed to the tomb in Old Church, High-street, Marylebone, amidst a large concourse of relations, connections, and friends, where are buried, his parents, his sister Sarah, and his brother Charles, there to mingle in one common dust.

Mr. Turle, the organist of Westminster Abbey, attended, with a band of choristers, to testify their respect for the character of the deceased. The

high and solemn service of the cathedral was performed with a splendour and dignity which produced a visible effect upon the spectators. The sublime ritual of the church was chanted to the strains of Purcell and Croft; and the affecting ceremony closed with the beautiful chorus from Handel's Funeral Anthem, "His body is buried in peace; but his name liveth for evermore." The pure intonation of so many practised vocalists in the open air, produced an effect, which, together with the solemnity of the scene, will not readily be forgotten, by those who witnessed this last sad tribute to one of the greatest musicians this country has ever produced."*

The name of Leach is well deserving a place in every historical sketch of English music, however brief; and to omit it, in the estimation of many, would be to make a blank that could not be filled by a more worthy name.

James Leach was born in humble circumstances, and principally earned his bread by the sweat of his brow, as a weaver, at Rochdale, in Lancashire. Having a natural musical genius, and yielding to its impulses in making some proficiency in the instrumental department, he became one of the king's band. But he was also distinguished as a vocalist, and appeared to most advantage in the

* See Wesleyan Magazine 1834, p. 596. 670. Watchman Newspaper for October 18th, 1837.

counter part. In this region he made his musical powers commendably known, as a singer at one of the great musical festivals, held in Westminster Abbey.

His first efforts at composition appear to have had no other object than his own recreation, or that of those with whom he was intimately connected. In the preface to his first set of tunes, he thus expresses himself:—"The truth of the matter is this; having had a turn for music from my infancy, I have employed my leisure hours in cultivating the same. A few years ago I composed a few tunes, and without the least design of their being made public, being at the time ignorant of the rules of composition. These few tunes, accordingly got handed about, and were introduced into many public congregations, insomuch, that I was called upon from all quarters for copies, so that I found myself under the disagreeable necessity of denying many requests of that kind. For, having a family to maintain with my hand labour, I had already spent more time than I could well spare; but a friend of mine, knowing my importunities of that kind, and wishing the tunes to be more generally known, advised me by all means, to compose a few more to some select pieces, and let a number of them be struck off, as the price would be small, so that such as wished to have them, might procure them at a small expence; and therefore I now submit them to the judgment of

the public; I mean such as understand music." This preface is dated Rochdale, June 29th, 1789, and it does not appear to have been reprinted in any subsequent edition. In the first sentence of the extract just given, I have altered a word or two, as the original is glaringly ungrammatical; indeed the whole preface betrays great ignorance of, in their plainest forms, the rules of literary composition, and shows it to have been Leach's unaided performance. The work was published by subscription, and met with such a welcome reception, as to encourage him to go on composing; indeed he announced in the same preface, that, "Another volume of tunes of the same size and price will be published in a few months." These two publications contain the whole of his psalm and hymn tunes. His set pieces and anthems, were issued in twelve numbers after his death, for the benefit of his surviving family. He came to his end in a melancholy manner. Sometime in the year 1797, he was taking a journey on the top of a coach, and while humming over the *Canaan*, the first piece he made, the coach upset, and he was killed on the spot, not more than thirty-five years of age, and in the midst of the current of rising fame. For some years before his death, he had nearly, if not altogether, laid aside his regular employment, and he was supported partly by the free generosity of his friends, and partly by the exercise of his musical talents, and the profits of

his publications. The Rev. Alexander Mather, a celebrated minister in the Wesleyan Connexion, of which body of christians Leach was a member, is said to have been a valuable friend to him, and used his influence to bring him into notice.

Of the character of Leach's psalm and hymn tunes, it would be as unjust as it would be ungenerous, to speak in terms otherwise than of respect. Should a keen and angry critic discern some feeble parts, either in its foundation or building up, and to try in the plenitude of his profession, to effect a breach, he would find them so much under cover of the general fortification, as to make the attempt dangerous to his critical reputation.

Perhaps Leach cannot be considered as evincing very great originality, in the severe, abstract, and comprehensive meaning of that term. Yet there is so much of honest, calm, thoughtful independence of genius, in conception and development, in the working out of its various themes, as to entitle him, in a subordinate degree at least, to be considered a reformer, in the republic of musical science, and at the head of a respectable class. In his music we recognize a considerable elevation above the prosings of the majority of composers which preceded him. He seems to occupy the same position in the history of music, as Dr. Watts does in poetical psalmody. There is in the character of his music an identity; as painters would say, a *keeping* in the likeness; that is, in princi-

ple, not in detail; in the superintending spirit of the theme, not in the themes themselves. For in this respect, few writers present greater variety than he, within the prescribed limits of psalmody. But, whether you turn to the solemnly impressive strains of *Complaint*, *Joannas*, *Egypt*, *Shields*, &c.; or plume yourselves to accompany him in *Rochdale*, *Syria*, *Redemption*, &c., in their more free and dignified evolutions; or unite in the airy and buoyant trippings of *Cyprus*, *Orpheus*, &c., you feel the presence of Leach, in the unity of his commanding genius. His imagination is not so bold, adventurous, and startling, as is that of some other first rate composers; but this is counterbalanced by an addition of judgment, which adds strength to the pinions of his imagination, and makes his flight more secure, and his return more certain. In him the different parts of the tune come to a friendly close, without the fear of each accusing the other of wandering too far from the melody of the theme. In his lighter effusions, there is nothing of dash, or prettiness, or frivolity, for the purpose of courting applause from low or vitiated tastes, And in his funeral specimens he does not sink into twaddle, and unmeaning and affected croakings; but,

"He is discreet,
And marks the point where sense and dullness meet."

In him there is also a fair proportion of strength, expansion, and harmony, blended with cheerfulness

and propriety of adaptation. He is moreover at times brilliant and tender.

His anthems and set pieces, are of unequal merit. His *Crucifixion*, as a whole, is the best. The duet is long, but its length is forgotten by the soul of poetry which animates the strain, addressing the hearer in the most exquisite associations of sound and sense, sentiment and feeling. The chorus is somewhat boisterous; but it naturally carries out the exultant joy at the triumphs of the Redeemer's love. *Animation* is an interesting piece, of a contemplative and philosophical cast of thought, inspiring expanding views of God in the works of nature. *Resurrection* is too long to obtain popularity, even had it just claims to mediocrity of merit; the length is a fault in many of them. Great many of his pieces were left unfinished at his death, which will account for the falling off in the latter portion.

The assertion of Dr. Burney is both bold and true, and is therefore encouraging to real though humble genius;—that "Music has been more advanced by unlearned men, than by philosophers and mathematicians." The Doctor's argument will not readily find a more striking illustration than in James Leach. A friend of the author, requested him to do justice to the character of "poor Leach," observing, that "he had been of great service to Methodism." The reason for such a request is too limited; as the Dissenters and Church of England

share the same benefits. To say that in all christian assemblies, where devotion breaks forth in praise, Leach's tunes are worthy of a place, would be only asserting the fact, the proof of which is heard, in the various and extreme parts of the militant church. And the day is very distant, when the strains of Leach will cease to stimulate the pleasures of devotion.

Edward Miller, Doctor of music, is a name of some note in the recent history of music. He was the son of a paviour at Norwich, and initiated into the same business. His ruling passion for music was so strong, that he soon broke with his calling, and he rather disreputably left his father's house. He shortly became a pupil under the celebrated Dr. Burney, when the latter resided at Lynn. In 1756 he was appointed organist of the church at Doncaster, where he remained to his death, which took place in 1807. Dr. Miller was author of several works on the science, both directive and executive. Of the former, was "Institutes of Music," and, "The Elements of thorough Bass and Composition." In these essays there is some useful instruction; and though he has laid under tribute the compositions of previous writers, his will not be thought unworthy of the same compliment. He also published "The Psalms of David, set to music and arranged for every Sunday in the year." For this work it is said he obtained three thousand subscribers. He rendered his services to

the dissenting body, by a selection of tunes adapted to Dr. Williams and Boden's collection of hymns. In both publications he introduced some of his own tunes; the general character of which does not reflect much merit on the name of their author; especially considered as a Doctor of music.

William Edward Miller, son of the above, had more musical genius, though less of its titles and emoluments than his father. Had he made music the study of his life, he would no doubt have obtained distinction in the profession. As it was, he was an instrumentalist and composer, of no mean reputation. His remarkable conversion to God altered his course, and in the thirty-third year of his age, he commenced the labours of a regular preacher among the Wesleyan Methodists. The duties of this office he discharged with great zeal, fidelity, and success, to the time of his death, in November 12th, 1839. He was ready for the change,—a heart full of harmonious love, throbbing to join in "the song of Moses and the Lamb," in the heavenly world. During the first years of his ministry he composed several tunes, especially adapted to particular occasions. He also published a collection of tunes under the title of "David's Harp," which had a tolerable circulation.

The name of Samuel Stanley is perhaps not so well known as are some of his tunes. He sung for a number of years at Carr Lane meeting-house in Birmingham, where now ministers the celebrated

Mr. James. He had not the advantages of either a musical or literary education; but he industriously plied his energies; and he studied the science with success; and the fruits of his genius will mellow with age. Stanley's strains are marked by dignity, smoothness, and pathos, and a truth to nature, that makes their visits, though oft repeated, welcome; and,

"Which still grow sweeter as they wider spread."

During his life he published a small volume of twenty-four tunes; and the instances are rare, of the same number presenting so little of the dross, refuse, and rubbish of composition;—all of them containing a good portion of the precious metal, and most of them bearing the currentable, the royal impress of the science. After his death, two other parts were successively issued; the former containing nineteen, and the latter twenty compositions. Every collection of tunes will henceforward shew a desideratum, where *Shirland* has not a place. He has now been dead some years.

William Matthews was born at Ilkeston, in Derbyshire, but spent the greater part of his life in Nottingham, following the occupation of a stocking maker. Through life he devoted a great deal of attention and time to music, to which he was enthusiastically attached. He published three separate works under the titles of "St. Asaph," "Sacred Music," and "The Cherub;" besides

several detached pieces. "The Shepherd," a christmas piece, was about his first, and perhaps his best effort. His "Zion" has not been without admirers, nor others of his anthemic compositions. Some of his common tunes have in them the elements of long life. His "*Tranquillity*" will find a welcome reception in every choir, where the ease, dignity, and swell of harmonious power are duly appreciated. Matthews is not so much noted for superiority of native genius, as for the effective management of materials that lay within his reach. Indeed he has been accused of transcribing the productions of other composers into his own pages, and then affectionately calling them his own. But this may be envy; and if the charge be partially true, it is a crime, the commission of which, if that be any palliation, has the countenance of more dignified names. He died in Nottingham, at the advanced age of seventy-four years.

If the last age exceeded that which immediately preceded it, in the number of musical compositions, it has certainly been outstripped by the present one, in a much greater proportion. But if the mantles of the musical Elijahs have been caught, they have been shreded up into so many parts, by the increase of the "sons of the prophets," till the inspiration of music has, in very many instances, degenerated into the most fallible and earthly association of sound.

It would be as unnecessary as inconvenient, to

endeavour to establish the above assertion by elaborate and minute investigation. Nor does it fall within the plan of the author, to consider those living composers of acknowledged ability; otherwise, the following, among others, might put forth claims for attention: viz., Arnold, Clarke, White, Ford, Jarman, Fawcett, Hawkins, King, Purday, Chappel, and Miller, but who must be passed over, with the exception of the last mentioned name, which, might plead *locality*, as an extra reason for a little consideration here.

Mr. Marmaduke Miller has made several common tunes, whose merits generally have procured for them a prompt and welcome reception into those companies where superior music is performed, besides several set pieces, which sustain the same character. But his latest and greatest effort, his Oratorio, of "*Israel in Babylon*," has brought his musical capabilities more under the critical notice of the public.

The Oratorio presents all the variety of recitative, song, chorus, &c., usually found in similar compositions, and perhaps with excess. It has been brought out three times before the public; the last of which was in Wesley chapel, Nottingham, in the christmas week of 1840; and was honoured with an audience, which both for number and character, could not be otherwise than flattering to the composer. On that occasion the choir was full and effective, numbering one hundred and

ten performers; which included the best vocal and instrumental talent in the neighbourhood; and assisted by an organ of respectable tone and compass. The performance was ably led by Mr. H. Farmer, of Nottingham, a violinist of rising reputation. The time taken in going through the Oratorio, which was somewhat hurried, including a few minutes rest, was just three hours.

In this attempt Mr. Miller has left far below him, a host of competitors of the common wing; and he has manifestly taxed his pinions for an eagle's flight. The attempt is certainly daring; and scarcely any thing will screen him from the charge of temerity, but a successful issue. It is evident he has not shrunk from the company of Handel, Haydn, and other princes of musical composition. It is moreover useless trying to divest yourself of the belief, that he has for some time cast upon those personages a keen scrutinizing eye; and has felt towards them the glow of emulation,—yea, the hope, if not of tearing the crown from their head, or of plucking the laurels from their brow,—yet, by the creations, and new associations of thought and feeling, to put forth a legitimate claim to sway his sceptre with them, over a section of the empire of music. That he will participate with them in such honours can hardly be doubted, but to what extent, remains yet to be shown.

He has rendered his task more difficult, by some of his words being the same (which indeed hardly

could have been avoided) as those to which Kent, Handel, and others of the same class have put their masterly strains. And it need not excite surprise, if people who have been accustomed to their music, should hesitate a little in giving him his just due.

The piece opens well, yet not floridly; and the interest in the main, increases with its progress. But by and by, the ear perceives a repetition of passages of similar construction. This is felt most in the former part, which is chiefly I believe in the minor key. But this defect considered in connexion with the general character of the piece, and the magnitude of the undertaking, will be almost lost in the surprise, that it is not much greater. In matter of course, imitative strains, there is no wonder excited at the recurrence of the same undiversified passages, because of the commonness of the practice; but in music of an original character, to which this Oratorio may lay no feeble claims, it is widely different;—but it is premature to criticise the piece, as no doubt before its publication, (which it is understood will not be delayed long, if the composer meets with proper encouragement,) it will undergo a severe revision. And that genius which could strike out such a continuous variety of melodies, and wake up such a compass of harmonic combinations, will not fail to make the Oratorio still more worthy of public reception.

END OF PART I.

PART II.

HEBREW MUSIC,

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

The importance of Hebrew music in connexion with their other customs and rites—difficulty of ascertaining the precise character of their music from want of proper symbols—the song of Moses on having crossed the Red Sea—the music employed—Jewish instruments described.

THE music of the Hebrews cannot but be interesting to every reader, at all anxious to fill up the sketch of its general history. This interest will be greatly deepened if the events of their history be thoughtfully considered;—considered, not merely as exhibiting music as one of the pictures in their civil and political character; but as associating itself with those bright displays of redeeming mercy, "When life and immortality should be brought to light by the gospel:" as broken interludes to that full and thrilling chorus, which was performed by a "company of the heavenly host," who sang to the astonished shepherds, "Glory to

God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men."

It is a settled article in the christian faith, that the laws, customs, and ceremonies of the Jews—whether political, civil, or religious, were not instituted by the caprice, or ambition, or even the wisdom of their rulers; but that they were mainly given under the special direction of God, and in connexion with the revelation of his will; and may therefore be looked upon as labels to those glorious mysteries which should be unfolded to the world, by the successive triumphs of the gospel dispensation.

The music of the Jews, along with many other branches of their arts and sciences, is involved in much obscurity. To this conclusion we may safely come, from the various, and even contradictory opinions, given upon it by those writers, who, with eminent qualifications, have paid great attention to the subject. One cause of the loss of their music is doubtless to be found, in the want of definite and precise *characters,* by which to fix its type on paper, or some other endurable substance. We know this reason will apply to the music of other ancient nations, as well as to that of the Jews. But considering the exclusive character of the Jews; the sanguinary wars in which they were engaged; the various dispersions to which they were at several times subjected; and the recklessness of their successive conquerors, in seeking to

destroy every thing peculiar to their national character,—we need not be surprised that no more of their compositions survive to cheer us with the music that gladdened their prosperous days. The maze which has surrounded the subject, has tended to excite inquiry and corresponding industry in latter ages, to regain the knowledge of past times. Great credit is due to those enlightened and laborious travellers who have penetrated, in the face of numerous obstacles, those countries where Jewish manners and customs have lingered among the people.

But to the scriptures we must be content to seek for correct information on Jewish music, illustrated and confirmed, it is true, by the voice of tradition and the testimony of travellers. From all accounts there given, judging from its effects, and the attention devoted to its cultivation, it must have been of a most magnificent description. The amazing power of their music, as occasionally observed in scripture, is equally as striking, as that which produced such wonderful effects in Grecian, as well as in the history of more ancient nations. And there is this difference in favour of Israelitish music: the accounts recorded in profane history, of the wonders of their music are doubtless often exaggerated, and sometimes entirely fabulous, while in the others, they are to be regarded as the sober statements of divine truth.

In writing a dissertation of Hebrew music, we

cannot include as a part, the knowledge of Tubal, and Tubal-cain; or the circumstance of Laban wishing to have had the opportunity of sending Jacob "away with mirth and with songs, and with tabret and with harp," to which we have previously referred; for the first may be regarded as the common property of all nations, and the latter, as describing the music of Syria, where Laban lived.

The first mention made of music, properly the music of the Jews, after they became a people, is in Exodus chap. xv. ver. 20., when Moses composed that sublime ode, so descriptive of the power, goodness, and wisdom of God, to celebrate the high praises of him who had delivered the children of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh, and the billows of the Red Sea. This poem, which is no doubt the earliest *lyric* poem extant, so full of bold conception and impassioned language, was *sung* by the ransomed host on the banks of deliverance. "And Miriam the prophetess took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances." It would seem as though the whole company were divided into two grand choirs, in which, Moses and Aaron led the men, and Miriam the women. It also appears that they sung by *turns;* and with variations of *soft* and *loud*, similar to our *solos* and *choruses*, adapted to the sentiments and language of the ode,—Moses, or Aaron, or both singing the song; while Miriam presiding over the female part of the choir, and the

instruments called in their aid to swell the chorus, by repeating the first stanza of the ode; for it is said, "And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Here we see music, both *vocal* and *instrumental*, employed to give effect to sentiments the most elevated, gratitude the most glowing, and homage the most reverential, that could well be imagined to dwell in the human breast, and employed also to deepen the impression which this stupendous miracle had made upon the minds of the people. Nor can we suppose them to have been so used in vain, for both the words and the music would often be in their minds, and upon their lips, on periodical and other occasions, awakening cheering recollections of the goodness of God in their deliverance.

The *timbrel* mentioned here, and which is in other parts of scripture sometimes called tabret, is of the drum kind, and precisely the same as our modern tamborine. The word *dances*, connected with the tabret and voice on this impressive occasion, is supposed by many commentators to be improperly, or at least, doubtfully rendered; that it means *instruments* of *music* of the *wind kind*. Dr. A. Clarke says, that, "in most of the places where the term occurs in our translations, an *instrument* of *music* bids as fair to be its meaning, as a dance of any kind." So that with this conviction of the meaning of the original word here

used, we may reasonably conjecture, that there were not only instruments of the drum, but also of the *wind* kind, employed in the performance of this celebrated ode. But notwithstanding this portion of scripture is given as a specimen of musical performances among the Hebrews, as Hebrew music, yet the music and instruments used may fairly be considered of Egyptian origin. This we infer from the time they had been in Egypt, as well as from the declarations of scripture in regard to the literary and scientific character of Moses; for it was said of him by the dying Stephen, that he was "Learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." He has here, as in other places, left us full proof of his skill in poetic composition, nor can we suppose, since poetry and music are such unalienable friends, that the latter would escape his notice.

As vocal and instrumental music were here conjointly used, by which to offer to the Almighty the devout thanksgivings of the Hebrews, so they continued to be used, nearly promiscuously in all their musical exercises, till the period of their political dispersion.

Their instruments were not materially dissimilar to those used by the surrounding nations, several of which we have already described. The following account of them may be taken as agreeing with the collated opinions of the learned.

The *organ* is supposed to have been a wind

instrument. It is mentioned in Genesis chap. iv. ver. 21. But it was not like the instrument which now goes by that name, as used in divine worship. It was of the flute kind, resembling Pan's reed, or mouth-organ of the ancients, and which is still in use.

The *pipes* mentioned in scripture so repeatedly, were no doubt of different kinds. One was the *funeral pipe*, "which appears to have been a long slender tube, terminating in a broad bottom. From a plate which we find in the *Admiranda Romanorum* of an ancient Palmyrene altar, one of the subjects sculptured on which is the funeral of the celebrated Trojan chief Hector, we find that the pipes were played upon by a figure, apparently a female, who led the procession. It was so long as to reach from the performer's mouth to the ground. From the great similarity which existed between the Palmyrenes and the Jews, we may consider the funeral pipes of the latter to have been of this description."*

The *Dulcimer*, is supposed in the first instance to have been made of reeds; but afterwards no doubt it was made of metallic materials. Of its shape and peculiar tone no record remains to tell.

The *Horn*, or *Crooked Trumpet*, was an instrument of great antiquity. It was made of the horns of oxen, cut off at the smaller extremity. It

* Constable's Mis. vol. 52, p. 88.

was an instrument of this description, which was sounded when the Lord descended on Mount Sinai.

The *Straight Trumpet*, was something after the fashion of our modern instruments bearing that name, and was made of various materials. The *silver* trumpet was only to be blown by the priests on solemn and special occasions.*

The *Harp* and *Psaltery* were of the *stringed* kind. The harp seems to have resembled that of modern use, and had some times six, and at others ten strings. It seems to have been played upon by David with the hand only;† though according to Josephus, the general mode of playing it was by a plectrum;‡ that is, a bit of wire, or cane, or some such substance.

The *Psaltery* is often confounded with the foregoing instrument. But it resembled a bottle or flagon, from which it derived its name. Josephus speaks of it as having twelve strings, and played upon in a way similar to the harp. David often mentions them together.

Of pulsatile instruments, the most common is the *Tabret, Tabor,* or *Timbrel;* they represent but one instrument, however, bearing so many different names; and resembling our drums and tamborines as described before.

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* Num. chap. x. ver. 1—10. 2 Sam. chap. xvi. ver. 23.

† 1 Sam. chap. xvi. ver. 23.

‡ Ant. book vii. chap. xii.

The *Cymbal* consisted of two large pieces of brass plate, of a convex form, which being struck against each other, made hollow sounds.* This instrument, till very lately, formed a part in every military band; but it is very properly giving place to more acceptable ones.

The *Sistrum*, or *Cornet*, was a rod of iron bent into an oval, or oblong shape; or square at two corners and curved at the others, and furnished with a number of moveable rings, so that when shaken or struck with another rod of iron, it emitted the sound desired.

The number of instruments here given, may appear small; yet they were in reality greatly multiplied and varied in regard to their shape, size, strength, and peculiarity of tone, according to the varied means, taste, and scientific skill of the musician. As we have before observed, the notices which scripture makes on the nature and progress of the art, are very brief, as indeed is the case with many other customs that prevailed among the Jews.

We have however so much information incidentally, or directly given in their history, as assures us that music, both vocal and instrumental, was incorporated into their *military* establishment;—mingled its charms with their *festive* and *social*

* 1 Sam. chap. vi. ver. 5.

assemblies;—softened and blended the sympathies of mourners on *funeral* and other *calamitous* occasions; and formed a permanent auxiliary in their *public* and *private devotions.*

CHAPTER II.

JEWISH MILITARY MUSIC.

Instrumental music used when going to battle—hymns sung—war of the Ammonites with Jehoshaphat—Saul and David's victories over the Philistines—its effects on Saul.

On commencing a battle, the Jews usually sounded a horn or trumpet as the signal of preparation and defiance.* Thus, when Jericho was besieged, the priests blew seven blasts on rams' horns.† But though our translators have rendered the original, by the terms "rams' horns," it hardly could have been the horn of the animal that goes by that name, as the horn of the ram is not hollow. The horns so used are generally supposed to have been made of metallic substance, such as brass or silver. But when marching to the scene of desperate conflict, various other instruments were used to animate the spirit, and inspire the hopes of victory in the bosoms of the warriors. Vocal music also lent its aid to fan their desire for conquest, and to fill their enemies with terror, as they raised on the tremulous air, "hymns" of praise to the God of Israel. So it was when the armies of the Moabites

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* Num. chap. x. ver. 9. 2 Chron. chap. xiii. ver. 14.

† Judges chap. vi. ver. 24. See Parkhurst.

and the Ammonites came against Jehoshaphat; "he consulted with his people," and as a means of ensuring victory, "he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord sent ambushments against the children of Moab, Ammon, and Mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten."*

And as music led on the people to battle, and dissipated the horrors of death in the view of splendid victory, so it added glory to their conquests, when they returned to meet the congratulations of their wives and children, and to pay their vows to the God of battles in the great congregation. The battle just noticed furnishes an instance. For the victorious army "returned every man of Judah and Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies. And they came to Jerusalem with *psalteries*, and *harps*, and *trumpets*, unto the house of the Lord."†

In the same style, Jephthah was welcomed by his daughter, on his return from a victorious engagement; "And Jephthah came to Mizpah unto his house, and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances."‡

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* 2 Chron. chap. xx. ver. 21, 22

† 1 Chron. chap. xx. ver. 27, 28. ‡ Judges chap. xi. ver. 34.

This practice was still more strongly and brilliantly manifested, on the return of Saul and David as victors of the Philistines. It is true, while its charms threw an excess of honour around the brow of the interesting shepherd boy, it furnished an opportunity for the jealous heart of Saul, to fulminate in its madness the most desperate attempts on the life of David. But so it was, "The women came out of all the cities of Israel, *singing* and *dancing*, to meet king Saul, with *tabrets*, with joy, and with *instruments* of *music*. And the women answered one another as they *played*, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."* This must have been a heart-stirring and animating scene, being full of dramatic effect, and performed before the eye of a conquering nation. Part responded to part in strains of increasing rapture. The impassioned choir was composed of women; and, fired by the enthusiasm of their sex, their strains would add value and acceptance to the triumphs of the conquerors.

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* 1 Sam. chap. xviii. ver. 7, 8.

CHAPTER III.

JEWISH FESTIVE MUSIC.

Isaiah's reference to the custom—the Prodigal Son—coronation of their kings a season of festivity.

THERE will be no difficulty in believing, that on occasions of mirth, music was used among the Jews, as among other people. Isaiah refers to the custom, when he says, "And the *harp*, and the *viol*, the *tabret*, and *pipes* and wine, are in their feasts." And when through calamitous and adverse circumstances, whether domestic or national, they could not indulge in their wonted recreations, the prophet observes:—"The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the joy of the harp ceaseth."* The practice is made fully apparent in the beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son; and which shows also that the custom was alive in the time of our Saviour. The younger son had returned from his thoughtless, beggarly, and miserable wanderings. His father had given up all hopes of his return; but the "dead was alive again, and the lost was found." And to evidence their joy on the occasion, his filthy rags were stripped off, and he was arrayed

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* Isa. chap. v. ver. 12.

in the "best robe;" "shoes were put on his" torn and callous "feet;" to furnish an ample and becoming feast, the "fatted calf was killed,"—an enjoyment to which he had long been a stranger; and to give animation, and zest, and unity to the whole, *music* and *dancing* (or music with instruments according to some) were added; for it was indeed an occasion when it was "meet to make merry," inasmuch as "the dead was alive again, and the lost was found."*

The coronation of the Jewish kings would naturally bring music into request. An instance may be given in the case of Joash, when he was crowned king. "All the people of the land rejoiced, and sounded with trumpets; and also the singers with instruments of *music*, and such as taught to sing praise."†

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* Luke chap. xv. † 1 Chron. chap. xxiii. ver. 13.

CHAPTER IV.

JEWISH FUNERAL MUSIC.

Mode of embalming their dead—Jacob's death referred to—Tabitha's death—our Saviour's death—Herod's death referred to by Josephus—funeral pipes often used—Mr. Carne's account of burials in Egypt—Dr. Shaw, J. Hartley—David mourning at Abner's death—Isaiah's death—persons hired to mourn—music adapted for funerals—anniversaries—hideous wailings and distortions at funerals—ruler's daughter referred to—passages from Jeremiah—their moral use.

THE *funerals* of the Jews were often attended with rites and customs that were extended, protracted, and costly; varied however in all these respects according to the ability of the friends of the deceased. Immediately on the extinction of life the eyes were closed by the nearest of kin, who gave to the lifeless corpse the final kiss. With reference no doubt to this practice, the Lord promised to Jacob, when he took his journey into Egypt, that Joseph should "put his hand upon his eyes;"* which promise was fulfilled; for it is said, that Joseph, after his father had expired, "fell upon his face and kissed him."† The next duty was to wash the corpse, which ceremony was

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* Gen. chap. xlvi. ver. 14. † Gen. chap. l. ver. 1.

repeated several times, and then lay it out in an upper room. When Tabitha died, it is said, "They washed her body and laid it in an upper chamber."* The process of embalming was frequently observed among the Jews, but it was confined to the rich and persons of distinction. So Jacob was embalmed, and the people "mourned for him three score and ten days;" that is, while the process of embalming was completing; thirty days in the absorbing process of nitre, and forty days in the application of gums and various spices. This practice was attended to in the time of our Saviour; for we are told that Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus bought about a hundred weight of the compound of aloes and myrrh; "and took the body of Jesus, and wrapt it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury."†

After the giving of the law by Moses, it was usual for them to keep their dead a much shorter period before interment; and after the Babylonish captivity it was still further abridged; indeed they often buried them on the day on which they died. The method of interment was not to inclose them in a coffin, after the European fashion; but to lay the body in an open bier or couch, according to the practice of all the East to this day. The biers on which the corpses of the rich were laid, were of a most costly kind. Josephus asserts that the body

* Acts chap. ix. ver. 37. † John chap. xix. ver. 39, 40.

of Herod was carried on a bier made of gold and richly embroidered.* The remains of the deceased were followed to the grave by their nearest relations and friends, both male and female; who sung dirges, and made loud lamentations, accompanied by instruments of music.

It was a very common custom, extending from ancient to modern times, to hire persons, who were mostly women, to make these doleful lamentations, which they generally performed in a most distressing manner. The funeral dirges which they sung or chanted on these solemn occasions, were chiefly aided by the soft plaintive melody of the flute. Josephus tells us, that, the funeral ceremonies of the Jews were not complete without music; and the number of flute players at these times often amounted to several hundreds; and repeated with the attendance of the guests for several days. Maimonides, a learned and able Jewish Rabbi, and considered a very competent authority on Jewish history, says, "The husband at the death of a wife was obliged to provide mourners to weep at her funeral, according to the custom of the country; that the poorest person amongst the Israelites never engaged less than two flutes and one mourner; and if rich, the expense and pomp of the ceremony were proportioned to the dignity of the husband." At Cairo, says Mr. Carne, in

* Tud. lib. xvii. chap. viii.

his "Letters from the East," "We met an Arab funeral; about twenty men, friends of the deceased, advancing under a row of palm trees, singing in a mournful tone, and bearing a body. The corpse was that of a woman dressed in white, and borne on an open bier, with a small awning of red silk over it." A French writer says, "The mourning of the Montenigrins (a people inhabiting a mountainous district on the level frontier of European Turkey) bears great resemblance to that of the oriental nations. On the death of any one, nothing is heard but cries, tears, and groans from the whole family; the women in particular, beat themselves in a frightful manner, pluck off their hair, and tear their faces and bosoms. The deceased person is laid out for twenty-four hours, in the house where he expires, with his face uncovered; and is perfumed with essences, and strewed with flowers and aromatic leaves, after the custom of the ancients. The lamentations are renewed every moment, particularly on the arrival of a fresh person, and especially the priest. A pall, or winding-sheet is thrown over the dead body, whose face continues uncovered as he is carried to church. While on the road thither, women, hired for the occasion, *chant* his *praise*, amid their tears. When the funeral rites are performed, the curate and mourners return home, and partake of a good entertainment, which is frequently interrupted by jovial songs, intermixed with prayers in honour of the dead.

One of the guests is commissioned to *chant* a "*lament*" impromptu; which usually draws tears from the whole company. The performer is accompanied by three or four *Monachords*, whose harsh discords excite both laughter and tears at the same time."* Dr. Shaw observes, in his "Travels through Palestine," "At all their principal entertainments, and to show mirth and gladness, upon other occasions, the women welcome the arrival of guests, by squalling out for several times together, Loo! loo! loo!" (a word which Dr. Shaw understood to be a corruption of Hallelujah.) "At their funerals, also, and upon other melancholy occasions, they repeat the same noise, only they make it more *deep* and *hollow*, and end each period with some ventriloquous sighs. For there are several women *hired* to act upon these lugubrious occasions, who, like *præficiæ*, or mourning women of old, are *skilful* in *lamentations*, and great mistresses of these melancholy expressions; and, indeed, they perform their work with such proper gestures, sounds, and commotions, that they rarely fail to work up the assembly into some extraordinary pitch of thoughtfulness and sorrow."†

The Rev. John Hartley, during his travels in Greece, relates, that one morning, while taking a

* See note to the Rev. Hartwell Horne's "Introduction to the critical study and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures," vol. III., p. 518.

† Travels, vol. I., pp. 435, 436.

solitary walk in Ægina, the most plaintive accents fell upon his ears that he had ever heard. He followed in the direction from which the sounds proceeded, and they conducted him to the newly made grave of a young man, cut down in the bloom of life, over which a woman, hired for the occasion, was pouring forth *lamentation and mourning and woe*, with such doleful strains and feelings, as could scarcely have been supposed other than sincere.*

The information thus elicited by travellers, who have penetrated that part of the world where the successive series of Divine Revelation were unfolded to man, throws vivid illustration on numerous parts of scriptures; without which they would be quite unmeaning, or at best but doubtfully understood. The general customs of Palestine, and adjacent countries, are regarded as the lineal descendents of the Jews, and present, with but little variation, the likeness of their progenitors. With these customs in view, we shall have but little difficulty in being sensible of the life and harmony existing in those passages of scripture where *music*, in its various forms and degrees, is referred to, as forming a part of the funerals of the Jews.

So when Abner, a brave captain in the host of Israel, died, David to show the value in which he had held his services, honoured the funeral with

* Researches in Greece, pp. 119, 120.

his presence. "And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, *rend your clothes*, and gird you with sack-cloth, and *mourn* before Abner; and king David himself followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron; and the king *lifted up his voice*, and wept at the grave of Abner. And all the people wept."*

There is a very important passage in connexion with Jewish funerals in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25. It runs thus: "And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentation to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel, and behold they are written in the lamentations."

From this passage of scripture we gather, in the first place, that besides the very sincere lamentations poured forth from the deeply afflicted heart of Jeremiah, as well as from many more of the people, at the loss of so pious and hopeful a king, there were persons *professionally* employed on this and similar occasions, here denominated "singing men and singing women." It would seem probable from this and other places, that there was a regular *profession*, or an *art* to which such persons paid particular and assiduous attention in order to become successful practitioners. And further, from the designation of this *order*, it appears not to have been one of mere honour, but

* 2 Sam. iii. 31, 32.

followed for its financial benefits, as a *means* of *living*. This consideration would doubtless, in the general, stimulate to more applauded performances, that their services might thereby command greater remuneration. Hence the extravagances into which these *hired mourners* fell in time, by substituting the apparatus of ill directed art, in the place of those channels, which nature has supplied, to pour forth the depth of her distress. It is true their funeral music, both vocal and instrumental, was at times peculiarly tender and plaintive, and mingled itself harmoniously with aspirations of inexpressible grief. But at other times, and often on the same occasions, as we have seen, it was extremely harsh and discordant, the reverse of everything agreeable and soothing in sound, accompanied with gestulations of an equally repulsive character.

We collect further, that there were compositions, both *musical* and *literary*, expressly adapted for these solemn seasons, such as *orations*, *dirges*, and *elegies;* for it is said, "behold they are written in the Lamentations." A few fragments of the orations said, or sung in part, at the grave of celebrated individuals, have been preserved; but the rest, which formed the collections of "Lamentations," we regret to say, exist only in the past.

It also appears that they had their *anniversaries*, or periodical seasons of commemorating the death of distinguished persons; at which times they

mouth, and teach your daughters *wailing*, and every one her neighbour lamentation; for *death* is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the street."* And again: "Therefore my heart shall sound for Moab like *pipes*, and mine heart shall sound like *pipes* for the men of Kir-heres."† The prophet Amos furnishes another instance in point. "Therefore the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord, saith thus, wailing shall be in all *streets*; and they shall say in all the *highways*, Alas! alas! and they shall call the husbandman to *mourning*, and such as are *skilful* of *lamentation* to *wailing*."‡

The spirit of and moral effects intended to be produced by these similitudes, prove satisfactorily that their originals were well known to the people; or, in other words, that *music*, in all its various modifications, and, indeed, contrarieties, was generally and continually; from the commencement to the close of their history, introduced by the Jews into their funeral ceremonies.

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* Jer. ix. 17—21. † Ibid. xlviii. 36.
‡ Amos v. 16. See also Eccles. xii. 5.

CHAPTER V.

JEWISH DEVOTIONAL MUSIC.

Music not much cultivated amongst the Jews till David's time—Saul's disorder—sends for David—David's success—various opinions on Saul's disorder—David appointed different officers in the tabernacle music—David's musical genius—his poetic character considered as shown in his psalms—the titles of the Psalms considered to be musical terms—various meanings of the word Selah—*Solomon's regard for music—Vast display of music at the opening of the temple—Hebrew music not much improved after this time—the Jews in Babylon—the temple rebuilt, and music revived—the genius of Hebrew music examined—Dr. Burney, Mr. Nathan, Dr. Burn, &c. quoted.*

THE music of the Jews, in any of its forms and uses, was seldom more conducive to its avowed purpose than when brought to the aid of devotion. As we have before observed, the children of Israel, in their exodus from Egyptian bondage, employed it in a praiseworthy manner, to raise their thanks to heaven at the close of their first remarkable deliverance. From a consideration of the knowledge then possessed of the *art*,—the estimation it must have been held in for religious purposes, as well as from the direct, or more scattered references made to its use in their history,—there can be no doubt from that period, that music formed an attractive part of Jewish worship. It does not

appear, however, for some time after their settlement in the promised land, that they cultivated it with much ardour, at least the inspired records furnish us with no such accounts, nor of any names that threw around the science the attractions of superior musical skill.

It was for David, the son of Jesse, whose ear and soul were tuned by the God of nature to the exquisite perception of the melody and harmony of sound, effectually to improve, extend, and give permanent charms to the science among his people.

David was not only an ardent admirer and cultivator of the science, but he was also an expert musician. This prominent trait in his character was fully brought out on his first entrance into public life. The occasion was singular. Saul, the first king of Israel, was the subject of a disorder that affected both his body and mind, termed in scripture "an evil spirit from the Lord," or, as some are disposed to render the original, *an evil spirit permitted by the Lord.* Whatever might be the precise nature of the disease, it was manifested by the most fearful signs of madness; so much so, that unguarded life was not secure in his presence, when the king was under its paroxysms. It is very natural to suppose that various means had been tried, and without success, when his servants requested the king their master to try the operation of *music* as a remedy. Whether this recommendation arose from a knowledge of its

success in any analogous case, or was a first experiment on David as an eminent musician; or whether it was a suggestion of pure miraculous impulse, or from other causes, we are unable to say. But the proposition was welcomed by the king, and search was immediately made for such a person, who, by his skill and dexterity in music, could best serve the purpose. The flattering choice fell upon David the Bethlemite, who was then a youth, under paternal care, and, at the moment of election, was duteously tending his father's sheep. David was possessed of great moral and personal attractions, for we are told "he was a mighty valiant man," and was "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance." These qualities, it may be presumed, would be no drag to the successful operation of his main recommendation, that of being "cunning in playing on the harp." David was received by Saul with every mark of esteem; and at the proper time, when the king was brought under the alarming domination of the "evil spirit," the experiment was tried, and tried with wished for success; for it is said, "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, that David took a harp and played with his hand; so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."*

The learning and ingenuity of philosophers,

* 1 Sam. xvi. 23.

theologians, and musicians, have been fully taxed in order to shew how music could operate upon Saul so as to produce the stated effect. A main point to be gained in the matter, is the knowledge of the disorder with which he was afflicted. Some contend that it was a demoniac possession. If so, music could not be supposed to have removed the disease upon mere natural or philosophical principles, but was an honoured means, under Divine direction, of accomplishing a miraculous effect. By others it is supposed to have been a mere mental malady, a species of melancholy which settled upon his spirit when his purposes, desires, and caprices were frustrated: a wild, revengeful fit of desperation, created by the occasional thwarting of his weak and jealous, yet determined ambition. Music thus pouring its tastefully modulated strains into a spirit filled with confusion, might hush it into peaceful serenity, by awakening into energy some friendly faculty, constitutionally susceptible of the delicacy of sound. And in minds where this susceptibility is strongly predominant, as perhaps it was in the case of Saul, we need not wonder at effects being produced similar to those under consideration. Such was the fact; and the beautiful language of Montgomery may be transferred from Tubal to David, when the latter stood before the agitated monarch as his musical physician, with his harp in his hand:—

"From chord to chord, ascending sweet and clear,
Then rolling down in thunder on the ear;
With power the pulse of anguish to restrain,
And charm the evil spirit from the brain."*

David directed his attention especially to the cultivation of devotional music; and as his influence extended, gave it increasing support. He placed it more conspicuously before the public eye; he gave it a more systematic form, and unfolded to the people the benefits of its sanctified use. This he did by his own example, and by the appointment of eminent chief, and numerous subordinate officers, whose duty it was to instruct its amateurs and conduct its performance. Thus he instituted, or, at least, greatly improved the *order* in music, and gave to it all the weight of kingly sanction.

Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were general grand masters of the music of the tabernacle:† names which frequently occur in the Psalms, to which more particular reference will be made hereafter. The former of these persons had three sons, the second six, and the latter fourteen. These, with their children, and probably other additions, amounting in all to 288, with a graduated scale of authority, in scripture language "prophesied" in, or, as we understand in modern speech, presided over, taught, and led on the music of the sanctuary. Thus the

* World before the Flood, p. 134.

† 1 Chron. xxv. 1.

records of the arrangement ran:—"All these were under the hands of their fathers for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harp, for the service of the house of God, according to the king's order to Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman. So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in the songs of the Lord, even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourscore and eight."* Under the chief and subordinate masters, were placed the surprising number of 4000† vocal and instrumental performers, all of whom were selected from the tribe of Levi. The labours of these 4000 performers were methodically divided, and their respective stations pointed out. We read they officiated "by courses," before the altar of burnt sacrifices, around which they were arranged in order; under the superintendency of Gershom, Kohath, and Merari, whose duty it was respectively to stand every morning "to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even."‡

We are given further to understand, that the king had a selection of music, and musical performers properly his own, over which Asaph had the honour of being master. Females it also appears formed part of the band of musicians,

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* 1 Chron. xxv. 6, 7. † Ibid. xxiii. 5.
‡ Ibid. xxiii. 30.

whose services were called into request to minister pleasure to the sovereign of Israel.

The character of David is enshrined in Jewish history, as the unrivalled patron of Israelitish music; nor is it introduced without similar honour into the page of general history. Had he flourished among the Egyptians, and early Grecians, he would have occupied a prominent place in their mythology, and doubtless would have superseded Apollo and Pan, as the presiding genius of poetry and song. To the Christian however, when he gazes up the vista of revealed truth; impressed with the doings of the worthies of God's ancient church; to him the "harp of David," the "songs of the sanctuary," and the "hill of Zion," and other significant expressions, have a talismanic influence, superior to the mention of the "lyre of Orpheus," "Arcadian bowers," "Parnassian groves," and "Silvan strains;" and awaken in, and diffuse through his bosom, the impulse of devotional song.

Early in life, as we have hinted, David became enamoured of the captivating charms of music. While tending his father's sheep, his *harp*, or *pipe*, was the companion of his crook; and the hills and vales bore animating testimony to the sweetness of his pastoral strains. And when called by the Lord to quit the peaceful plains, for the battle field; when summoned by the anointing of prophetic influence to resign his fleecy charge, and, as the

under-shepherd of the Lord, to "lead Judah as a flock;" when he exchanged his humble crook for the ensigns of royalty, amidst the varying and important events which those changes involved, his love of music did not forsake him. The native and darling passion of his heart, was not enervated by the pressure of official cares, nor did it droop and wither beneath the scorching rays of unhallowed ambition. Though he was "the man who was raised upon high," he was still "David the son of Jesse;" though "the anointed of the God of Jacob," he was, and is still acknowledged, "the sweet psalmist of Israel."*

From the testimony of his incomparable Psalms, we learn at once that the constitution of his mind was essentially *poetical.* It was elastic, expansive, and intense; and confident in its resources, he rose above the petty rules that govern thought in the lower regions of intellectual being. His descriptions and illustrations, as his subject demanded, were equally grave and brilliant, graphic and impressive. He excelled in vigour of conception, even on his most sublime themes; and the tone he struck when at the height of his most adventurous imaginings on the goodness, power, wisdom, and holiness of God, fell harmoniously on the deepest feeling of his devotional heart. Never were poetry and music more sweetly joined in one

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

person, or better directed by the genius of religious inspiration.

His Psalms in the original, according to the best Hebrew scholars, are given in conformity to the strictest rules of poetical composition. We have the *ethic*, in which are rendered the most valuable maxims for the government of our conduct in the different stations of life. In the *elegiac*, we are deeply interested by his pathetic ruminations on the most mournful and calamitious topics. In the dignity of the *epic*, or narrative mode, the reader is irresistibly carried away with the miraculous events of Jewish history; abounding with episodes, amply charged with the dangers and deliverances of his private and public life. But a great number of the Psalms of David, display a more extended and mixed form of composition; namely, the *dramatic*, or that of *dialogue*, carried on between different characters. "In these dialogue Psalms, the persons are frequently the psalmist himself, or the chorus of priests and Levites, or the leader of the Levitical band, opening the ode with a proem declarative of the subject, and very often closing the whole with a solemn admonition drawn from what the other persons say. The other persons are, Jehovah, sometimes as one, sometimes another of the three persons; Christ in his incarnate state, sometimes before, and sometimes after his resurrection; the human soul of Christ as distinguished from the Divine essence. Christ in his incarnate

state, is personated sometimes as a spirit, sometimes as a king, and sometimes as a conqueror; and, in those psalms in which he is introduced as a conqueror, the resemblance is very remarkable between this conqueror in the book of Psalms, and the warrior on the white horse in the book of Revelations, who goes forth with a crown on his head, and a bow in his hand, conquering and to conquer. And the conquest in the Psalms, like that in the Revelations, ends by the marriage of the conqueror."*

But however diversified the Psalms of David may be in their respective poetical features; their general character is *lyrical;* that is, adapted to music, both *vocal* and *instrumental.* This is manifest, not only from the construction of the verse, and tenor of the sentiments, but also from their express addresses to music, and continual mention of various instruments of music; intimating to the reader, in this case at least, that the alliance between poetry and music, is so strongly sympathetic, that they are twin-sisters of the same devotional heart.

As David set his own words to music, being both a scientific composer and a skillful performer, it is to be expected that those strains would be well fitted to convey the spirit of the verse.

As the titles of many of the Psalms have a strong

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* Bishop Horsley, Psalms, vol. I., p. 16.

bearing on the subject principally under consideration, a few explanatory observations upon some of them, may not be unacceptable.

The word *Neginoth*, is prefixed to the fourth, and six other Psalms; and signifies stringed instruments, to be played upon by the fingers. Calmet, whose critical knowledge of the subject is held in great respect by most modern commentators, would translate the titles of those Psalms where this word occurs: *A Psalm of David to the master of music who presides over the stringed instruments.*

Nehiloth, which is in the title of Psalm the fifth, is supposed to have been a *wind* instrument, but whether of the organ or flute kind is unknown.

Sheminith, which is put to the title of Psalms the sixth and twelfth, is supposed to have been an octhord, or harp of eight strings.

Shiggaion, the title of the seventh Psalm, is understood by some critics to mean a wandering song, as David composed it when he was a fugitive by the persecution of Saul; but by others it is said to signify a song of consolation in distress, and is to be understood in the same sense as the word *elegy*.

Gittith, is found at the head of Psalms the eighth, eighty-first, and eighty-fourth. According to Rabbi Tarchi it signifies a musical instrument brought from Gath. But as the original Hebrew denotes *wine press*, Calmet thinks that it is pro-

bably meant for a *song*, which was to be sung at the time of the vintage.

Muth-labben, which appears in the title of Psalm the ninth, has drawn out various meanings. It is believed to imply a chorus of virgins; and with this definition in mind, Calmet thinks the Psalm was addressod to Benaiah, whose name is comprehended in the latter part of the word, and who, moreover, was the leader, or precentor of the band or choir, mentioned in 1 Chron. chap. xv. ver. 18. 20.

Mahalath, in Psalm the fifty-third, denotes a dance, such as was practised at some of their peculiar festivals. Hence Calmet reads, "an instructive Psalm of David, for the chief master of dancing, or for the chorus of singers and dancers." Dr. A. Clarke, however, with others, does not think the word embraces the allusion to dancing at all, but simply to music.

Mahalath-Leannoth, in Psalm the eighty-ninth, may mean a responsive Psalm, or song, of the same description as the above.

It will be past conjecture, that the titles which these Psalms bear, were not labels merely to their literary contents, but that they had a governing influence on their music. It would seem as though the Psalms when composed were addressed thus by David to the masters of the band, or choir, that they might be set to music; or that the words, accompanied with the music, were handed over to

these distinguished musicians in order to the right performance.

A few remarks on the word *Selah*, will not be irrelevant to the subject now under notice. This word *Selah*, which occurs more than seventy times in the book of Psalms, and three times in the prophecy of Habakkuk, from its generally isolated position, has given rise to many a question in the village school, which the "wondrous wise" head of the schoolmaster could with difficulty answer; and has been clothed with as many meanings, by common adult readers of the bible, as "Joseph's coat of many colours." But this ignorance may be readily excused in them, when it is considered what difficulty the learned have, to discover its precise original meaning.

Parkhurst says, the word *Selah* directs the particular attention of the reader to the passage with which it is connected. Jerome asserts that it connects what follows with what went before; and further expresses the words to which it belongs are of eternal moment. Aben Ezra, says it is like the conclusion of a prayer, answering nearly to the word Amen. Others hold that it creates a new sense, and change in the metre. But the concurrent testimony of commentators goes to show, that, *Selah*, is used principally, if not entirely as a *musical term*. Accordingly Dr. Wall conjectures that it is a note directing that the last words to which it is joined should be repeated by the choir;

and he observes, it is always put after some remarkable or pathetic clause. Some imagine that it denotes the *time* of the music, and was synonymous with our word *slow;* and others, that it indicated a change of the song, or modulation of sound. Herder and Rosenmiiller contend that *Selah* is equivalent to a *rest*, or *pause*, for the vocal performers, while the instruments kept playing in the form of symphony; while Hewlet thinks it was a sign of the concluding symphony.

Dr. Jahn supposes it to mean a repeat, and corresponds with the Italian *Da Capo.* Calmet is of opinion that the ancient Hebrew musicians sometimes put *Selah*, in the margin of their psalters, to show where a musical pause was to be made, and where the tune ended; just as in the copies of the gospels, which were solemnly read in the early ages of the Christian church, the Greek word *telos*, or the Latin word *finis* was written in the margin, either at length, or with a contraction, to mark the place where the deacon was to end the lesson; the divisions of chapters and verses being then unknown; or else he thinks the ancient Hebrews sang nearly in the same manner as the modern Arabians do, with long pauses, ending all at once, and beginning all at once; and therefore it was necessary, in the public service, to mark in the margin of the Psalm as well the place of the pause, as the end, in order that the whole choir might suspend their voices, or re-commence their singing

at the same time. Rabbi Kimchi, and Grotius, with whom concur Dr. A. Clarke, and the Rev. R. Watson and others, say, that *Selah* is not only a note of emphasis, by which we are called to observe something remarkable in the sense, but that it is a *musical* note also; denoting at once the elevation of the voice in singing, and the raising of the heart to God in serious meditation upon the words of the song.*

The general and simultaneous impulse given by David to the cultivation of music, and its adaptation to devotional purposes, was not suffered to languish by the energetic mind of Solomon, his son and successor. We have authority for saying, that among his other brilliant excellencies, his love of poetry and music were not the least striking; for "he spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five."† And in the collection of his various attainments, and pursuits after happiness, which his sanguine mind had pictured in the visions of hope; he says, "I got me men-singers, and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts."‡

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* See Horne's Introduction, vol. IV., pp. 113—115, where other authorities are added in confirmation of the above. See also Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary, Psalm iv. 2. Rev. R. Watson's Works, vol. VI. p. 164. Wilson's Elements of the Hebrew Grammar, p. 315, fourth edition.

† I Kings iv. 32.

‡ Eccles. ii. 8.

How far Solomon might approach an accomplished musical composer and performer, we are not informed. But from the encouragement which he gave to it, and the ardour with which he courted pleasure within the circle of its enchanting influence, it will be no stretch of probability to suppose, that he inherited some of the musical excellencies of his distinguished father.

When the temple was dedicated to its solemn purpose, the display, and effect of music, was amazingly grand and imposing. Josephus makes a statement, which, though it may be true, yet from its want of support from collateral testimony, must be received with caution. He says, that "TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND MUSICIANS were employed at the opening of the temple." But from the plan of the building, the time taken in its erection, the immense cost of its materials, especially its internal decorations, the skill of the workmen employed, the miraculous circumstances which had attended the worship of God amongst them, the currents of influence which would flow to the confluence of the temple, the halo of universal attraction that would gather around the opening of so celebrated a building to so solemn a purpose;—from these considerations, and strengthened also by the musical reputation of David, who was the original projector, we may safely infer that the music would be splendid, and the performers numerous, and carefully selected. And we are

assured on the authority of the sacred penman, that this part of the ceremony was well pleasing in the sight and ear of heaven; for it was in the plenitude of the musical performance, that the presence of God filled the temple, and made it an emblem of the habitation of his glory. "The Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren; being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals, and psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar, and with them a hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets: It came to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voices with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."*

After this palmy period in the musical history of the Jews, we find but little amplification on the subject in the records of inspiration; nor do their apocryphal writings add much to the stock of our information. It is true, as we travel through the broken, yet picturesque scenes of their history, our

* 2 Chron. v. 12, 13, 14.

spirits are often thrilled, and detained, by rapturous poems laden with reiterated sentiments of praise to God, for his marvellous displays of goodness and power to the people of his choice:—and again we are saluted with bursts of psalmody full of the animation of hope; and as the breath of prophesy inspires the music, we fancy we hear symphonious sounds awakened in the breast of distant ages, which give back their choral echoes of "Emanuel God with us." But the temper of their music was afterwards mostly of the plaintive kind; struck by the tremulous hand of sorrow, and bearing forth the sighs of accumulated grief. The fitful ebullitions of its strains, and languishing cadences, but too fitly harmonized with the restless and wasting character of their civil and political state.

The fame of their music went before them, when they were taken captives to Babylon. But it had lost its characteristic strength, and all its sprightly and graceful movements. For them in captivity its charms were gone. Its genius silently languished under the iron hand of oppression. The captive Jews sought the feeble consolations of solitude on the banks of the rivers of Babylon. There they gave unrestrained license to their sorrows, and they sat them down and wept. Their useless harps they hung on the willows,—sad and silent all; except, when the heedless winds played upon the strings as they winged past, and started tones of complaint, which mingled with the light

rippling sound, and deep-toned murmurs of the waters, as they hurried past the distressing scene.

But even here the voice of their oppressors intruded, saying, "sing us one of the songs of Zion!" What other answer could be returned for this humiliating demand, than that which was given? "How can we sing the Lord's songs in a strange land?" No, their indignant resolves arose with their insulted feelings; and full of the recollection of home, they refused to prostitute the music of their beloved sanctuary, to minister to the pleasure of a heathenish multitude. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem—was the vow of each, and all;—if I teach the harp of David to breathe its consecrated strains into Babylonish ears, let my right hand forget its cunning, and for ever lose its skill in awaking its voice again. If I sing them one of the songs of thy Zion, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; let my *voice* lose all its *melody* of tone, and my ear all its delicate perception of sound. But take their own artless description;—for what figures can embellish it? what paraphrase can add strength to its powerful appeal to our sympathies? "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, sing unto us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."*

After their deliverance from Babylonish captivity, through the agency of Cyrus, the Jews returned to their country, and began to rebuild the temple; which took place about 500 years before Christ; nearly 500 years from its first dedication by Solomon. All the former ceremonies and modes of worship were re-established under the superintendency of Ezra and Nehemiah. Nor was their music forgotten, but collected, encouraged, and resuscitated by the spirit of liberty.

Such was the estimation in which they still held the music of the temple, that they employed it at the commencement of their work as the most proper mode of expressing their joy, and offering up their praise to God for being again brought to their native country. For we read that, "When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the Lord after the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel."†

* Psalm cxxxvii. † Ezra iii. 10, 11.

Judas Maccabeus also, after having purged the temple of the Syrian abominations, celebrated, with the same solemnities, the dedication of a new altar to the true God; and we also learn from Josephus, that the use of this sacred music was continued down to the final destruction of the temple.

We may just observe, that music was employed by the Almighty as an agreeable accompaniment to the revelations which he made to his prophets; or, more correctly, a preparatory means for the more favourable reception of such revelations. When Elisha the prophet was requested by king Jehoshaphat to prophesy concerning the project and issue of the contemplated battle, he felt his mind so grieved and perturbed, by the improper behaviour of the young men at Bethel, and their shocking end, that he was disqualified from entering immediately on so solemn and important a work. As a befitting introduction, he employed the soothing power of music. And he said, "Now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him."*

Of the genius of Hebrew music but little is known, as not a vestige remains for the guidance of the

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* 2 Kings iii. 15.

anxious enquirer. The Bible contains no technical phrases, or definitions, that might give the reader an outline of the system, or any idea of internal, and minor dispositions, saving those parts, to which we have previously directed the attention of the reader. Dr. Burney, who spent a great part of his life in collecting materials for his History of Music, says, "All that has hitherto been collected, relative to the music of the Hebrews, shows that it was in general use among them, from the time of their quitting Egypt, till they ceased to be a nation; but what kind of music it was with which they were so much delighted, no means are now left to determine."*

Their religious music at least, is supposed to have been in the *diatonic* scale. But they had no musical characters, this being, as is well known, a modern invention. And yet it is difficult to imagine music so enthusiastically pursued, and so sedulously cultivated, as it was by David especially, and by others in his time, without more significant and peculiar marks to guide its performance. One thing is pretty certain however, that whatever instruction directed the performer, it was attached to the words which was to be sung or played. It cannot therefore be supposed to have been very complex and difficult of performance.

Thus Mr. Nathan speaks of the present Jewish

* Vol. i. page 254.

mode of singing in Divine worship; and he may be considered altogether, no mean authority, and being also of Jewish extraction:—"Every word of prayer offered to the Deity, whether in their private or public devotion, is given in a kind of chant, which, although it may not come under the exact character of legitimate recitative, still bears the sound of song. So essential do they consider melody of voice towards rendering their prayers acceptable to God, and for increasing the force and energy of language, that when a lad is taken to learn Gemanah, the first question of the Rabbi to the parent is, 'has the boy a good tone?' And he considers the greatest compliment is paid to his pupil when it is said, 'he reads with proper tone.'"*

Their music was of course traditional, not only while they preserved their political independence, but as low down as the fifth century. "When Moses received the law on Mount Sinai, it was given to him not only with the sound of trumpets, but with song also. The Jews have in consequence been prohibited from repeating the Bible in other manner than as it was recited or chanted to them by Moses; the tune of which is supposed to have been handed down faithfully from father to son, until about the fifth century, when Rabbi Aaron Ben Aser invented certain characters to

* Nathan's History and Theory of Music, page 43.

represent the accent and true tone, that were given to each word, by which means the original recitative or chant has been preserved to this day.

"These singular characters, or (more properly) abbreviations, consisting of about twenty-seven in number, contain in each of them, or rather they each express, as much as three, four, five, or more, of our modern notes, forming long or short phrases, more or less complete, expressive of different sentiments, in some measure resembling our present style of ornaments. These abbreviations of notes are judiciously placed under each word in the Bible; and that the reader should not fail in the true expression, they are even placed with great caution under the very letter that must be accented in the word; so that every man or child in every age or country, must chant with one pathos, with one expression.

These abbreviations bear such seeming intellectual varieties of sound, that every word throughout the Bible, whether majestic, sublime, awful, appealing, affecting, reproaching, or applauding, has each its proper expressive sound, regulated by these characters." * The same spirited writer observes, that, "They (the Jews) have with increased tenacity, preserved their ancient melodies, and bequeathed them by memory from one generation to another, with the same jealous care that a

* History of Music, page 43.

miser would his most valued treasure, and as the best melancholy relics left to remind them of their 'kingdom passed away.'"

Against this opinion of Mr. Nathan, of the unbroken and undivided descent of the ancient Jewish music, to the modern children of Abraham, Dr. Burney opposes their present practice; he says, "The only Jews now on the globe who have a regular musical establishment in their synagogues, are the Germans, who sing in parts; and these preserve some old melodies, or species of chants, which are thought to be very ancient. At Prague they have an organ." He further remarks, that, "No two congregations sing alike; if tradition has been faithful, therefore, in handing them down from the ancient Hebrews to any one synagogue, who shall determine to which the pre-eminence can be attributed?"*

Some writers, as Mr. Stafford observes, "Depreciate the character of Hebrew music, and describe it as partaking of the nature of their language, which, being almost divested of vowels, is harsh and untunable, and does not, to a stranger, appear to be much adapted to the concord of sweet sounds." But the assumed conclusion on the vowels in the Hebrew language, in the extract just given, is contrary to the real fact, as the Hebrew language

* See Rees's Cyclopedia, Art. Music.

abounds with vowels; and therefore any defect in their music cannot be argued from that source.

Dr. Burn, in his Sermon on Psalmody, maintains the same opinion, and says, "'The sounds in Hebrew, above all languages, correspond with the thing signified; and that therein it hath the most remarkable signatures of nature. Matters of grief are expressed by slow sounding syllables; of rage, by harsh and difficult pronunciations; and matters of joy gently die away in sounds of ease, and delightful utterance.

"The expression in Hebrew which signifieth 'praise the Lord,' hath nothing in it of harshness, which those words do bear in English, and therefore the modern composers leave it untranslated; I mean the term Hallelujah, which is a kind of *Gloria Patri* in miniature. There seemeth something enchanting in the very sound of it. So free is it from all raggedness of accent, and plays upon the tongue with such liquid fluency, that when they have once taken it up, they know not how to leave it. They toss it to and fro, and transfuse it through all the variety of melody, catching at every syllable; until at length, like an expiring taper, (as it were exhausted of its substance) it languishes, trembles, and dies away."

The following eloquent remarks of Mr. Nathan, which are full of national feeling, and the enthusiasm of his theme, may with propriety conclude this dissertation on Hebrew music. "It is suffi-

ciently authenticated in sacred and profane history, that, in the days of David and Solomon, the Jews were celebrated for their cunning in song; and also when they hung up their harps by the waters of Babylon. Since then the pen of history has had little to note respecting them, excepting their fallen state. The traces however of their former greatness in song, may be daily met with in those, who, from their poverty, can have no musical advantages; and yet their natural flexibility of voice, and nicety of ear, guide them in the execution of cadences and complex divisions, that might shame many of our public singers;—and those who have listened with enthusiastic delight to the sweet strains of Leoni, the perfect and masterly tones of a Braham, and the withering ballads of Mrs. Bland, will all bear testimony, that the power of song has not forsaken them."*

* History of Music, page 45.

END OF PART II.

PART III.

MUSIC OF THE CHURCH.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The conflict of opinions among professors of Christianity—music rejected by the Quakers in Divine worship—held in various repute among different denominations—its intimate connexion with preaching and prayer—the order of the discussion stated.

THOSE persons who cordially receive the gospel as a system of "spirit and life" to the world, and of glory to God, and who bind up their own individual happiness with its success, cannot but deplore the differences of opinion which exist among Christians,—apart from doctrinal disputes,—on the *manner* by which its great ends should be accomplished in the exercise of its established ministry. It will be sufficient to call up before the vision of the reader a host of writers in the different positions of aggressive and defensive warfare on this point, to instance—preaching written or unwritten sermons,—extemporary or forms of prayer,—the mode of taking the Lord's supper,—the various schemes

of church government, with their designation of officers, each and all appealing to divine authority with confidence of success. And among other agitated topics, the delightful employment of offering up praise to God, on the consecrated altar of *melodious strains*, has not escaped the conflict of controversy. It might have been expected that the genius of Christianity, whose heaven-sprung soul of joy thrills through all its doctrines, and animates all its duties, however remote or minute, —would, if it had not given complete unity of sentiment and opinion, have kept at bay the demon of discord among those who profess to act under its harmonizing influence. This view of one of the presumed preventive means to ward off the curse of angry controversy, we well know is not new; nor is the lament with which we now mention it new, to many who have seen the Church of Christ torn by rude dissensions.

Music, in some form or other, makes a prominent part of Divine worship among all denominations, with but few exceptions. The principal exception is found among the respectable, yet in many respects, eccentrical body of *Friends*. Those persons who but occasionally attend upon their public worship, are generally struck with the absence of hymns or psalms. And this absence impresses the occasional visitor with the defective character of their worship. He contemplates the scene as cold, flat, and monotonous. He seems to himself as

breathing an atmosphere where rapturous thought and joyous feeling languishes, for want of their exciting and wonted exercise,—for want of the social, vigorous, and congregational effort of making melody unto the Lord, in "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." His views having been formed under the influence of a different habit, will most likely prevent him from reaping the same benefit, as one trained to that form of worship. It is also probable, as indeed experience has proved, that by a continual attendance upon such a mode of worship, if he may be not reconciled to it, its singularities will be dissipated, and he may derive advantages beyond his expectation.

The non-use of singing among the Quakers, though at first it may appear singular, is really a natural offspring of their creed. They profess to reject all form and methodical arrangement in conducting their worship,—except indeed the *systematical* rejection of all *form* may be considered formal,—whether public or private. Thus a preacher presumes not to know what part of Scripture truth shall be the subject of his ministration; much less does he profess to observe rule in the division of his discourse, or the time its delivery shall occupy,—or indeed, whether he will preach at all on any given occasion. Still more unlikely are the members of this body to adopt human compositions previously prepared, as a means through which to present their supplications to God. These

religious exercises must all be left to the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, who will call and qualify the minister so implicitly, that while at times he may be prompted to read and explain a portion of the word of God, he may at other times be restrained in such an exercise on pain of grieving the Holy Spirit. Psalms and hymns brought out with the charms of music, combining more or less of *science* and *method*, cannot for a moment be supposed to form part of a worship so purely extemporaneous. How far this practice is supported by Scripture, or is analagous to the employment of the blessed above, or tends to promote living devotion in the church below, we shall not stay to enquire; but, while the *Friends* stifle, and banish from their sanctuary one of the strongest propensities of the human breast, and which Divine influence has often employed to waft the flame of devotion,—we will hasten to those sections of the Christian community where its joys abound.

But in addressing ourselves for this enjoyment, the alacrity of our step is clogged, and the buoyancy of our feelings somewhat saddened, by recollecting, that, in those public congregations and private assemblies, where Christians profess to

> "Wake all the tuneful soul of love,
> And touch the sweetest string,"

there is not, with regard to the subject of music, in its various relations and bearings, that *concord* of *sentiment* in which we should delight.

Very distant opinions are held by the wisest and best of Christians on the use and abuse of music in Divine worship; opinions almost as wide asunder as the antipodes, and comprising as many modifications as there are climes and temperatures on the earth. In all this there may be more weight of reason, and honesty of purpose, than we are in the habit of giving each other credit for. The voice of education, in many, applauds or condemns it; in others, an association of circumstances has combined to beget a rooted hostility to an elaborate and scientific use of music, from the trouble it has given the church, and the inroads it has made for secular usages and immoral characters, to the injury of the purity and simplicity of Divine worship. Others have come to an opposite conclusion, from having experienced the poverty of musical aid in their respective congregations. A rigid adherence to Scripture, to its very letter, is the inflexible rule of some persons; while in others the rule of Scripture interpretation is more lax,—they endeavour to gain a congregation on a more liberal policy,—accommodating itself to the customs and spirit of the times. All this however furnishes an important fact,—the strong hold which music, in Divine worship, has upon the public mind, notwithstanding its difference of opinion. As a respectable author observes: "It is a religious ordinance of so high antiquity, one which has been so signally owned of God for the comforting and

edifying of his church, and for alluring even those who are without to her services, that too great care cannot be taken to render it attractive, so that our 'praise be comely' and devotional." It is a service which comes under the direct notice of both preachers and people; the ignorant and learned; its operation is brought to bear upon the "true worshipper," as well, also, as on the indifferent spectator. It takes its stand with preaching and praying; and is one of the every staple ordinances of religion, by which the soul carries on holy commerce with heaven.

In prosecuting the plan of this work, we may inquire, whether *instruments* of music are proper to be employed in Divine worship? Whether *melody* or *harmony* is to be preferred? Whether *anthems*, *symphonies*, and *fuguing* ought to be admitted? And whether *choirs* of *singers* tend to further the object of Divine worship? In endeavouring to answer these questions it will be our duty to consult the authority of Scripture, the customs of the early Christians, and the claims of circumstances and times.

CHAPTER II.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

The design of instruments to assist the voice—Dr. Adam Clarke's objections to them stated, met by various considerations—their use under the law no proof that they are to be used in the Gospel—our Saviour's practice and opinions referred to, does not forbid them—the opinions and practices of the Apostles, on the use of instruments, referred to—celebrated theological writers quoted, Baxter, Dr. Comber, Dr. Gorden, Bishop Horne, and Leigh Richmond—great difficulty in saying to what extent instruments were used in the first ages of the church—Martina and Dr. Burney quoted—a comparative view of the human organ *of sound with* instruments *of music—the great expression of music by Charles Wesley's playing—several instruments mentioned—their comparative merits for Divine worship.*

In pursuing the subject of this chapter, we may state what is no doubt admitted as a fact, that instrumental music is generally used in Christian worship as an auxiliary to the human voice. This usage is founded upon the belief, that it is not only a scriptural, but an efficient means of carrying out the intentions of Christian psalmody. But in this general belief there are exceptions in those who regard it as an innovation, as unscriptural, and as inimical to the spirituality of the gospel. And this protest against the use of instruments of music is

not given as a matter of mere opinion, which may be rejected or adopted without entailing serious consequences; but as one of law and essential principal, and thereby affecting in practice the very elements of the Christian character. Objections carrying out these views, have frequently been made by writers of various degrees of worth, but scarcely any one has more clearly and forcibly expressed his judgment against instrumental music, and carried out his hostility against it in his voluminous writings, than has Dr. Adam Clarke. We think we cannot do greater justice to the sentiments of the anti-instrumentalists, than by giving a quotation from the learned Doctor, where most of their objections will be embodied, in his clear and emphatic language.

"Did ever God ordain instruments of music to be used in his worship? Can they be used in Christian assemblies according to the spirit of Christianity? Has Jesus Christ or his Apostles ever commanded or sanctioned the use of them? Were they ever used any where in the Apostolic church? Does the use of them at present in Christian congregations ever increase the spirit of devotion? Does it ever appear that bands of musicians, either in their collective or individual capacity, are more spiritual, or as spiritual, as the other parts of the Christian church? Is there not more pride, self-will, stubbornness, insubordination, lightness, and frivolity, among such persons, than

among the other professors of Christianity, found in the same religious community? Is it ever remarked or known, that musicians in the house of God have ever attained to any depth of piety, or superior soundness of understanding in the things of God? Is it ever found that those churches, and Christian societies which have, and use instruments of music in Divine worship, are more holy, or as holy, as those societies who do not use them? And is it always found that the ministers who recommend them to be used in the worship of Almighty God, are the most spiritual and useful preachers? Can mere sounds, no matter how melodious, where no word or sentiment is or can be uttered, be considered as giving God praise? Is it possible that pipes or strings of any kind can give God praise? Can God be praised with sounds which are emitted by no sentient being, and have in themselves no meaning? If these cannot be answered in the affirmative, then is not the introduction of such instruments into the worship of God anti-christian, calculated to debase and ruin the spirit and influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ? And should not all who wish well to the spread of pure and undefiled religion, lift up their hand, their influence, and their voice against them?"*

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* Dr. Adam Clarke's Christian Theology, by S. Dunn, pp. 270, 271.

The learned and pious divine here gives his opinion with that frankness, which distinguishes all his discussions. Nor will it be doubted, that, from his long and extensive acquaintance with individuals and societies, as a preacher of the gospel, the conviction from which he speaks was mainly formed by witnessing mischief, which he conceived had been produced by the use of instrumental music. Nor would it be right to fritter away the edge of censure, conveyed in the above remarks, which ought to be felt by all who have thus invaded the propriety and sanctity of Divine worship. Notwithstanding, in turning away from this philippic of the worthy Doctor—groaning with charges, that look the more ugly from the thin interrogative covering in which they are wrapped—some lingering suspicion, we confess, remains, that he, thus pleading for the *simplicity* and *spirituality* of Christian worship—for that is the principal criterion of judgment in the case—has committed himself to opinions that cannot be fairly defended. The avowed and implied premises on which the Doctor has built his theory, are very extended; and the zeal and confidence with which he has blazoned it in raising it, only the more exposes any defects to the view of those who may happen to be of another opinion.

Leaving out of consideration any argument that may be derived for their use, from various sources, that person puts himself in a dangerous position

who wages war against the whole phalanx of instrumentalists, and goes forth for their extermination from religious worship. The recollection, that multitudes of enlightened men in every age and country have allowed, and participated in, their use; that piety has grown up under their influence, and the dying saint has found them pleasant companions even to the verge of heaven, is enough to frighten most considerate persons from such an attack. Dr. Clarke, however, was no ordinary man, and could often conquer where others failed; but *he* has more than once, we think, launched his bark on an "ocean of learning," on an expedition equally fruitless, with the one now under notice.

Besides, it seems quite unwarrantable to make the use, or non-use of instrumental music, a test of piety, or prosperity of the cause of religion, in regard to people, preachers, or places. This principle, if adopted, as a criterion of Christian conduct, and generally acted upon, would open a wide door for caprice, prejudice, and party feeling, and would indeed prove the destruction of piety itself.

It is also of importance to recollect here, the vast variety in the capacity and talents of mankind, and the magnitude of attainments which are within their grasp; all of which, under the direction of an enlightened judgment, may be made conducive to the happiness of man and the glory of God. It is obvious, that each one, if left to his own choice,

will pursue that exercise, for which his constitution of body and mind has especially fitted him.

It would be a question, not at all foreign to our present purpose, to ask, if those persons who declaim against instruments of music, have a *taste* for the pleasures of music generally, and are *skilled* in the science. We do not pretend to say that approbation in its full extent, will always be given to instruments, when these qualities exist, nor the contrary; but we think generally, when the objections which are now before us, are earnestly urged, there is but little judgment in, and relish for, the beauties and charms of music. If such be the case, then those persons ought to hesitate, in sweeping away as rubbish, that which other people may value as gold and silver; inasmuch as they in their turn, may suffer from the same line of conduct.

We cannot, therefore, pay much regard to objections against a temperate use of instrumental music, when the objectors are confessedly ignorant of its pleasures. They may judge for themselves, but not for others. And for the same reasons it is equally unjustifiable, to infer from such a use of them, the want of religious prosperity in any place. If the cause of religious depression is to be tested by this rule, then every man will have one at hand, arising out of his own peculiar complexion of mind. The preacher is either too learned, or too illiterate;

too methodical, or too lax; the prayers too long, or too short; too formal, or too incoherent; and the whole service too tedious, dry, and inanimate; or too wild, noisy, and irreverential. Thus, each sees the cause of the mischief, and each feels justified in applying his remedy; till the life of religion is destroyed; like the patient, who perished by a multiplicity of physicians.

That attention to this part of musical performance has often been carried to excess, is a fact that will be readily admitted. Like all the branches of science, and every literary attainment, and indeed every good thing, it is liable to abuse. But the *use* of a means and the *abuse* of it, stand in two very different relations to the principle for which we are contending. Well would it be for musicians, and the cause with which they are connected, if they would stop at the line where use ends and abuse begins; to give music its full due, without taxing for its support other exercises and interests of religion. But in too many instances this is not the case. If, however, a musician, or a singer, gives a little more attention, time, and expense to the science than is just necessary to perfect him in its practice; if when he has made himself a proficient in its use, he should look upon his performance with too much complacency, and estimate his services too highly; if, indeed, he should place his instrument and note-books a little too near his heart,—this erring individual is en-

titled to a portion of mercy for these sins of enthusiasm, which are found more or less in every one, who has the genius and determination to excel.

We are well aware that this mode of meeting objections, and proving the righteousness of a cause is open to some rebuke; because it is giving a license to one error by the production of another; exalting numbers as the test of right and wrong. Still it has the merit of equality and impartiality; and whoever finds fault with the rule, he cannot who has proposed it, as it is only meeting him on his own ground.

Having briefly considered the spirit and manner of reasoning, which would exclude instruments of music from Divine worship, on the mere *supposition* and *insinuation*, that they are inimical to the success of Christianity, in whatever place or by whomsoever exercised or patronized; as well also, having noticed the unfairness of investing the improprieties which have occasionally attended the use of instruments in Divine worship, with power to effect their permanent exclusion, we shall now apply to scripture, and other sources, for less equivocal arguments in their favour.

No doubt will be left upon the minds of those persons who are familiar with the writings of the Old Testament, that musical instruments were used by Divine appointment in that dispensation. And as has already been shown in a former part of this

work, they were not only used in military enterprises, to stimulate courage in the face of danger, or in their convivial exercises, or domestic devotions; but also in the stated and public worship of the God of Israel. That is a fact settled beyond dispute. But it has been well observed, "He must be at a loss for proofs in favour of instrumental music in the church of Christ, who has recourse to practices under the Jewish ritual." It will certainly be expected that we look into the New Testament, and take our final instructions from that more simple, spiritual, and perfect announcement of the will of God.

The mode of worship which Jesus Christ instituted, and which was carried out by his Apostles, forms a strong and delightful contrast to the cumbrous, complex, and expensive ritual which was enjoined upon the people, by the laws of Moses. That was an unnatural state of things; adopted but for a time, to accomplish a given purpose; and so soon as that purpose was accomplished, they were abolished. As the Apostle argues, "It was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, to take away sin." And the same inefficiency marked all the other "carnal ordinances," and "divers washings," which then were enjoined. They were indeed no more than "the shadow of good things to come," in point of intrinsical value, while in regard to those who performed them, "they were a burden

which," as our Saviour told the Jews, "neither they nor their fathers could bear." When the "true light came," then their real character appeared, or rather they were obscured by the "brightness of its appearing;"—when Christ offered himself up, as a sin-offering, for the crimes of a guilty world. It was then that the ceremonies, and peculiar observances of the Mosaic law, received their final accomplishment and dismissal; in him was the confluence, in which all these separate streams terminated. So that we are taught by the gospel, that no *place*, or *time*, or *mode* is consecrated as essential to the proper worship of God. True worshippers, "worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

Whether the use of *instruments of music* in Divine worship, with some other practices, were included in the sentence of annihilation which our Saviour pronounced upon the ceremonial code of Moses, will require a slight consideration. It has been well observed, that "much of the law has passed away; its impressive ceremonial is no more; but this very circumstance—that the law was in part typical, that it was designed, in many of its provisions, to answer a temporary purpose, and that in the fulness of time Moses was to give way to Christ—may have been carried to an extreme. * * * * Though much has passed away, much has remained."

We might instance the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper; the mode of reading and explaining the Scriptures; the forms of prayer, and the postures adopted in its practice; and the use of regularly measured language adapted to music, in offering up praise to God,—all of which partake of a ceremonial character, and remind us of their plenitude of influence in the dispensation of Moses. And what rule can be applied, without carrying with it the charge of invidiousness, to exclude instruments of music? Where the voice of revelation is silent, there is sufficient reason for discontinuing a great many of their rites and usages; because they were arbitrary and cruel enactments, without any observable meaning or design, and therefore so far, in that respect, they could afford no pleasure in the performance, especially to persons of refined thought, and benevolent and tender feelings. It is manifest they derived all their value and virtue *solely* from the *appointment of God*, and a *belief* in such an appointment. But not so in regard to music, and musical instruments; they form a science, the pursuit of which is general and perpetual; and the *exercise* of which contributed *present* pleasure, apart from any ulterior design. Instruments of music had an existence before the Levitical dispensation began; and possibly were introduced by the Almighty in compassion to the people, to relieve the tediousness of those duties which were, "a shadow of good

things to come." And the reasons that made their exercise welcome among the Jews, cannot but give them a recommendation to Christian assemblies. *

A reference to the practice and statements of Jesus Christ and his apostles, it is presumed, will not favour their exclusion. The allusions which our Saviour makes to the subject are very few. On one occasion when he did so, if his notice did not convey a direct approbation, it could not be construed into a censure of their use. "We have *piped* unto you," says he, "and ye have not danced." And in the other case, of the prodigal son, the Saviour employed instruments of music in a prominent manner, to show how parental affection was aided, in carrying out its rapturous joy, at the return of the long lost wanderer to his father's house.

It is readily admitted here, that our Saviour does not refer to the *religious* use of instruments of music; but to them in their liberal and common use; and as a custom that was well and agreeably

* There is a passage in the experience of the Rev. Henry Martyn, which adds force to the sentiment of the text. "Since I have known God in a saving manner, *painting*, *poetry*, and *music*, have had charms to me unknown before—I have received what I suppose is a taste for them; for religion has refined my mind, and made it susceptible of impressions from the sublime and beautiful. O how religion secures the highest enjoyment of those pleasures which keep so many from God, by their becoming a source of pride."—*Memoirs*, *p.* 61.

known,—that he might give weight to the doctrines which he was inculcating.

We are not aware that in the discourses of Jesus Christ, any *explicit* direction or commandment is put forth, as it respects their religious use. Certainly those who advocate their use, are justified in claiming the benefit of our Lord's silence. For it is fair to presume, that if their use be so repug nant to the spirit of the gospel, and so destructive of its operations, the great head of the church, who saw the conflicting opinions of distant ages as present, would have left on record some expressions of his disapprobation. This presumption is the more reasonable, from considering that our Lord regularly assembled with the Jews in worship, in which music, no doubt, formed a part; as well also that this part of the service was intimately connected with the character of David, whose fame lived among other things, in the invaluable aids he had bequeathed to the devotional exercises of the sanctuary. We say it might have been expected that if our Saviour had disapproved of the practice, in some of his explanatory discourses, or altercations with the Jews, he would have made us acquainted with the fact. And if these considerations will not avail, for want of our Lord's affirmative authority for instrumental music, *vocal* music will be in jeopardy for want of the same support. We gather from the sacred historians, that on one occasion, and but one, our Saviour

with his disciples sung a hymn. In fact, it seems that the Redeemer did not intend to disturb the *principle*, or *lawfulness* of the practice in question at all, but to leave it open to the church, to follow or not, to a greater or lesser extent, as their *circumstances*, *qualifications*, and *Christian judgment* might decide.

This mode of interpretation may explain why the subject of music, in any of its forms, occupies so little of the writings, and still less, of the practice of the apostles. That part of their work which was the most essential and the most easy of performance, would principally claim their attention. Preaching and praying was no doubt that important part; and *singing* or *chanting* would be added, as physical and mental qualifications, and circumstances would allow; and of course *instruments*, in this stage of the cause, if at all, would be more sparingly used. This procedure is in the order of things; and manifests itself in the infancy, progress, and establishment of religion in any locality or nation. First we have the *necessaries*, then the *conveniences* and *embellishments* of Divine worship.

In confirmation of the principle which we have been endeavouring to maintain, a few extracts from some of our celebrated theologians, will not be unacceptable to the reader.

Thus speaks the pious and acute Richard Baxter:—"It" (that is music) "is not an instituted ceremony merely, but a natural help to the mind's

alacrity; and it is a duty and not a sin to use the help of nature and lawful art, though not to institute sacraments of our own. As it is lawful to use the comfortable help of spectacles in reading the bible, so it is of music to exhilarate the soul towards God. Jesus Christ joined the Jews in the use of it, and never spoke a word against it. * * * * It is not a human invention, as the last Psalm and many others show, which call us to praise the Lord with *instruments* of music. Why should the experience of some privileged self-created person, or half-man, that *knows not what melody is*, be set up against the experience of all others, and deprive them of all such helps and mercies, as these people say they find no benefit by?"*

Dr. Comber observes, "Since the glory of God is manifested to all lands, they ought all to join in praising his holy name, and that by all due means that may express our hearty joy, particularly by all sorts of music, by stringed instruments and voices, and by wind instruments also, for music is the gift of God; and since all ages have used it, so we may without just offence to any unprejudiced persons, especially being commended in this and other places of Scripture."†

Dr. Gouden, bishop of Exeter, who lived in the times of both the Charleses, in his work on the

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* Baxter's Works, vol. V., p. 499.

† Commentary on Psalm xcviii.

liturgy, says, "Who doubts but that David, and the whole church of the Jews, served God in spirit and in truth, amidst those joyful and harmonious sounds which they made with singers and instruments of music. The gift and use of music is so sweet, so angelical, so heavenly, and divine, that it is a pity God should not have the use of it in his service, and the church an holy and comfortable use of it. Such an orient pearl ought not to be used only in civil conventions, or abused in wanton carols and vain effusions, which is to put a jewel in a swine's snout. Certainly the Christian church hath more cause to rejoice than the Jews had." *

The same train of thought and feeling is evinced by bishop Horne, in equally explicit language. "Thus much is clear, that the people of God are enjoined to use all various kinds of them" (instruments of music) "in the performances of their Divine services. And why should they be not so used under the gospel dispensation? We read of sacred music before the law, in the instance of Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, who, to celebrate the deliverance from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, 'took a timbrel in her hand, and the women went out after her with timbrels and dances.' The custom, therefore, was not introduced by the law and abolished by it. Well regulated music, if it ever

* Page 35.

had the power of calming the passions, if ever it enlivened and exalted the affections of men in the worship of God, (purposes for which it was formerly employed), doubtless hath still the same power, and can still afford the same aids to devotion. When the beloved disciple was in spirit admitted into the celestial choir, he not only heard them singing hymns of praise, but he heard likewise 'the voice of harpers, harping upon their harps.' And why that which they are represented as doing in heaven, should not be done, according to their skill and ability, by saints upon earth; or why instrumental music should be abolished as a legal ceremony, and vocal music, which was as much so, should be retained, no good reason can be assigned." *

The sentiments of the excellent Leigh Richmond, in an epistle to a musical friend, are worthy of respectful attention. "I am persuaded," says he, "that music is designed to prepare for heaven, to educate for the choral enjoyment of paradise, to form the mind to virtue and devotion, and to charm away evil, and sanctify the heart to God. A Christian musician is one who has a harp in his affections, which he daily tunes to the notes of the angelic hosts, and with which he makes melody in his heart to the Lord. Does he strike the chord with his hands? It is that he may bid lute and

* See the whole of his commentary on the last Psalm.

harp awake to the glory of God. The hand, the tongue, and the ear, form a triple chord, not to be broken. Bring music, my beloved F—— to the test, and your vocal hours will not be spent in vain. The instruction of your childhood will supply you through life with a fountain of pleasures drawn from the true source of legitimate recreation. Sing the songs of Zion, and amidst the vibrations of the air, may true prayer and praise ascend to heaven, and enter into the ear of the Lord God of our salvation; and the harmonious combination be complete."

It will be proper to inquire what sanction the early ages of the Christian church gave the use of instruments of music in public worship. But on this point ecclesiastical history is so silent, or complex, as almost to leave its readers at liberty to answer the question as they are affected, either in the affirmative or in the negative. The decision of impartial investigation is, however, that they were very sparingly used, if used at all, in the first century, at least, of the Christian era. The learned Martina is of this opinion, and he is an authority of no mean consideration, having devoted long and anxious attention in compiling a voluminous history of music, as well as other valuable compositions on the science. The researches of Dr. Burney also are to the same conclusion. He says, "After the most diligent enquiry concerning the time when

instruments of music had admission into the ecclesiastical service, there is reason to conclude, that, before the reign of Constantine, as the converts of the Christian religion were subject to frequent persecutions and disturbances in their devotions, the use of instruments would hardly have been allowed; and, by all that can be collected from the writings of the primitive Christians, they seem never to have been admitted. But after the full establishment of Christianity as the national religion of the Roman empire, they were used in great festivals, in imitation of the Hebrews, as well as pagans, who, at all times, have accompanied their psalms, hymns, and religious rites, with instruments of music."

Nor is there any specific information on record, as to which kind of instruments were first introduced. No doubt they would be both of Jewish and pagan origin; such as we have described in a former part of this work. But the *organ*, of all instruments, though possibly not the first in use, was the most generally approved of, in the service of the church. Some say it was initiated into religious use in the twelfth, others in the eight, and others in the fourth century. A description of this instrument, written thirteen hundred years ago, has been preserved, which says:—"The organ is an instrument of divers pipes, formed with a kind of tower, which by means of bellows is made to produce a low sound; and in order to express

agreeable melodies, there are in the inside movements made of wood, that are pressed down with the finger of the player, and produce the most pleasing and brilliant tones." A descriptive epigram of this instrument, said to be the production of Julian the apostate, who lived in the fourth century, is given in English verse by Dr. Buckley. It runs thus:—

"Reeds I behold, of earth the rigid spoil,
Reeds of a novel growth, and barren soil;
That not heaven's, but blasts mechanic breathe,
From lungs that labour at their roots beneath;
While a skill'd artist's nimble fingers bounds
O'er dancing keys, and wake celestial sounds."

Stafford quotes St. Jerome's assertion, of doubtful authority, of an organ with twelve pairs of bellows, which might be heard at the distance of nearly a mile; and another at Jerusalem, that might be heard at the Mount of Olives.

It will be unnecessary to make any further observations here, for the purpose of shewing the high estimation in which music and musical instruments have been held by most sections of the church, from the first few centuries, at least, down to the present time. If from no other sources, it will be seen, to some extent, from the brief sketch previously given in these pages. It must, notwithstanding, be remembered, that, like all other popular customs and systems, music in its various forms and appendages, has been the subject of revolution,

and has risen and fallen in public approbation. Thus several Roman pontifs violently discarded instruments from the papal choirs. Strong currents of opinions set in, for and against them, at the Reformation; some of which swept them away from many churches. Various reactions and alterations took place. Cromwellian principles and enthusiasm shewed but little quarter to instrumental music in England; and the same rage for steril simplicity bundled the organ out of Scotland, designating it, "*The devil's box o' whistle pipes.*"

Minds prompted by generous and conciliatory intentions, as well as open to conviction, cannot but feel some of their objections to the position which this chapter maintains, melt away, or at least considerably softened by the evidence which we have here adduced. It is in vain, we well know, to expect the *full* accomplishment of such an object, either on this, or on any other disputed ground. Fierce and penetrating indeed must be the rays of those arguments that will render the mind pliable, and capable of receiving other impressions, than those which it has cherished under the freezing influence of prejudice. It not unfrequently happens, that the more singular and erroneous the opinions entertained, the greater will be the obstinacy displayed in their retention. But this is in order. The person who pants for desperate positions, may be expected to make use of desperate means to preserve them. Hence

in recurring to the matter in question, where the main body of objections have been fairly met and routed, others spring up in the out-skirts of the campaign, which though ineffective, yet serve to perpetuate the warfare. Thus, some assuming the tone and position of Christian philosophers, and surveying the chain of causes and effects, and the fitness of things, say, that instruments of music are improper mediums through which to offer worshipful feelings to God; it is giving that body, which is made of wood, iron, brass, and such like materials, an intellectual and moral character, which is revolting to a mind that sees and feels the immeasurable distance between spirit and matter, formal and spiritual worship. How can God be pleased with sounds which are emitted by no sentient being, and have in themselves no meaning? Is it possible that pipes, or strings of any kind, can give God praise?

Let us examine this objection, which is specious and truth-like, and see if its foundation be as firm. This is resting the merits of the case, not on the quality or quantity of sound, or on the persons that make the sound, or the places or times when and where the sound is made, or on anything of the kind,—but on the *connexion* subsisting between the *formation* of *sound*, and the *mind*. And we ask at once, what essential difference is there between the mind and the formation of sound in the human organs, and that emitted by instruments

of music? In reality none. This must be evident on a slight glance at the principle of their organization. That part of the body where the voice is formed is a *mere*, though at the same time a very curious piece of mechanism. By information supplied by physiologists, the construction of the *larynx* and *glottis*, where the quality of sound is formed, and the method by which the air is propelled through them from the *lungs*, with all the minor, yet numerous parts of the *apparatus*, as much develope the principle of practical musical science, as can be observed in the construction of any instrument of music. The human musical organ is respectively more or less perfect, and varying in kind; producing tones sweet or harsh, rough or shrill, soft or loud, in strict conformity to such varieties observed in almost every instrument of music. Both are made of *perishable* materials; both are liable to be *in tune* and *out* of *tune;* and both fall into *disuse*. They are both therefore *equally* distant from the mind, and *equally* acted upon by it. The mind produces human music by acting upon its physical organs, formed for that purpose, as it does in directing the motions of any other part of the body; and it produces music on an instrument through the medium of the breath, fingers, &c. In the absence then of any *express revelation* from the Almighty on the subject, we may ask with the confidence of having a favourable decision, why should not the tones emanating from

an instrument of music be as acceptable to God as tones formed by the lungs, propelling the air through the wind-pipe of any human being?

But it is said that the human voice is capable of transmitting, with greater effect, the sentiments of the mind and the feelings of the heart, than can be obtained from an instrument. In replying to this statement, we must lay out of consideration the faculty of *speech*, so characteristic of the human species, as being, when confined simply to its functions, a mere matter-of-fact representation of ideas and things; and which may, or may not have a particle of poetry, eloquence, or music, in its intonation. Musical instruments, therefore, with regard to some persons, have the advantage of the human musical organs; for though there is speech, yet there is, as we commonly say, *no voice*. And if the comparison be instituted between superior instruments and superior voices, the difference in musical articulation, to those who are skilled in its language, (and they are the characters competent to judge) will not be so great as we might at first imagine. Every piece of music, which is the production of a master genius, contains the matter of some particular kind of discourse; and when a skilful performer touches the instrument, such as a violin, bass viol, piano, or an organ, every part of it instantly seems to wake into life,—full of thought and feeling. Its tones of soft, sweet, languishing pathos, have a language that is well

understood and responded to by every sorrowing heart,—and its buoyant strains are equally animating. It tells its varied story with thrilling and resistless influence to every ear capable of understanding its language. Thus the skill and feeling of the musician passes over, as it were, to his instrument, and it becomes the living organ of the various conceptions and emotions of his soul. Many instances of this fact have been both read and witnessed with astonishment, the moment a first-rate player has taken the instrument into his hand.*

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* That part of the body where the voice is formed, is a subject of very interesting investigation; and a few additional observations may not be unacceptable to some of my readers. The most particular and essential part of the organ of voice is the *larynx*, situated at the lower part of the neck, or *trachea*, as physiologists term it. Through the medium of vessels, the air is propelled from the *lungs*, through the *larynx*, and *glottis*, the aperture that leads into the mouth. The quality and volume of voice, does not depend entirely on the formation of the *larynx*, but also on the internal diameter, elasticity, and nobility of the *glottis*. And here, by the action of the tongue and the nostrils, the voice acquires the character of speech. The lungs, the windpipe, including the larynx, glottis, &c., have been compared by different writers, to as many different instruments of music. In accounting for the strength and modification of sound, an ancient opinion attributes it to the expansion and contraction of the glottis, and its action to be something like that of a flute. Others consider the variation of sound to be owing to the tension and relaxation of the *ligaments* of the glottis; and these ligaments become vibrating chords: and so the apparatus approaches the nature of a violin.

It is said of the late Charles Wesley, son of the Rev. Charles Wesley, that the organ under his

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Then again, others consider it both a wind and chord instrument at the same time. To these may be added the resemblance it bears to an Æolian harp; and the whole length of the windpipe acting in the manner of a drum.

It is important to remark, that those animals only, which have lungs, possess a larynx. And it appears, that the addition of membranes and muscles into the structure of the larynx, and the variation in their shape, position, and elasticity, is the cause of various sounds by which quadrupeds and other kinds of animals are respectively distinguished; such as neighing, braying, barking, and roaring; to purr, as the cat and tiger kind; to bleat, as the sheep; or to croak, as the frog; which last, however, has a sack, or bag, of a peculiar character, in the throat, or cheek, directly communicating with the larynx, on which their croaking principally depends.

But with a view to the explanation of musical sound, it will be proper to turn our attention to the feathered tribes. In them the larynx is of a very peculiar kind, and admirably adapted to produce that endless variety of sound with which we are so often delighted. It is observed, in them, "The lungs, windpipe, and larynx, may be regarded as forming a natural bag-pipe, in which the lungs supply the wind; the trachea, or windpipe itself the pipe, the inferior glottis the reed, or mouth pipe, which produces the simple sounds; and the superior glottis the finger holes, which modify the simple sounds into an infinite variety of distinct tones, and at the same time give them utterance."

"Amongst singing birds, Mr. Hunter, who at the request of Mr. Pennant, dissected the larynx of many distinct kinds, states, that the loudest songsters have the strongest muscles, and that the skylark has the strongest of the whole. He observes, also, that among the divisions of birds, the muscles of the male are stronger than those of the respective female,

hand "really seemed to speak, and to be endued with intelligence and feeling; while the entranced

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whose voice is always less powerful. In birds that have no natural voice he perceived no difference of muscular power in the larynx of either sex. From this most complicated machinery, in the vocal organs of birds, we find numerous species possessing powers of an extraordinary kind. In many of them, as the nightingale, the natural song is exquisitely varied, and through an astonishing length of scale. In the manakin, the song is not only intrinsically sweet, but forms a complete octave, one note succeeding another, in ascending and measured intervals through the whole range of its diapason."

But there is no species of birds more intitled to notice than the *mocking-bird*. This is a sub-division of the thrush kind. Its own natural notes are delightfully musical and solemn. But beyond this it possesses an instinctive talent of imitating the notes of every other kind of singing bird, and even the voice of every bird of prey, so exactly as to deceive the kind it mocks. It is, moreover, playful enough to find amusement in the deception, and takes a pleasure in decoying smaller birds near it, by mimicking their notes, when it frightens them almost to death, or drives them away with full speed, by bringing upon them the screams of such birds of prey as they dread.

In Gardiner's *Music of Nature* it is observed, "It is difficult to account for so small a creature as a bird making a tone as loud as some animals a thousand times its size; but a recent discovery has shown, that in birds the lungs have several openings, communicating with corresponding air-bags or cells, which fill the whole cavity of the body from the neck downwards, and into which the air passes and repasses in the process of breathing. This is not all: the very bones are hollow, from which air-pipes are conveyed to the most solid parts of the body, even into the quills and feathers. This air being rarified by the heat of the body, adds to their levity. By

hearer appeared to be transported beyond the precincts of the material creation, and placed in those regions of purity and love where there are heard 'thousands of blest voices uttering joy.' In every mind that was capable of being affected by hallowed sounds, he produced sensations of wonder and delight."

It is not to be denied that, in popular worship especially, *literal* expressions are the proper accompaniments of music, as it adds fire to the imagination, and gives greater precision to the attention of a miscellaneous audience.

When people are warm in the admiration of a cause, they will look in all directions for arguments to support it. The advocates of instrumental music fancy they find approval in heaven, by the mention there of harps. But this assistance is assailed by

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forcing the air out of their body, they can dart from the greatest height with astonishing velocity. No doubt the same machinery forms the basis of their vocal powers, and at once solves the mystery."

And further, "it is clear that the imitative, like the natural voice, hath its seat principally in the cartilages and other moveable properties that form the larynx. And from the peculiar construction of this part, it is not to be wondered at, if the human organ sometimes successively cultivate that imitative power; and that we should occasionally meet with persons who, from long and dexterous practice, are able to copy the notes of almost all the singing birds of the woods, or of the sounds of other animals; and even to personate the different voices of orators, and other public speakers."

those in the opposition; seeing that that is altogether a figurative representation, and that it is contrary to common sense to suppose that instruments of music literally exist and are played in heaven. But then that argument will also destroy there the use of *voice*. According to their use on earth, and judging by analogy, each mode of praising God may be equally proper in heaven. But the truth is, our knowledge of the *mode* of existence in the eternal state is so limited, that theories built upon it, like the one now referred to, must be very light and precarious, and avail nothing in practice.

By the foregoing attempt to defend the prudent use of instrumental music, there is no intention to undervalue the human voice. Each should have its due. The organ of human music may be said to be an instrument of God's direct workmanship, though subject, notwithstanding, to the improvement of art. It is an intimate companion to the soul, and is ever ready to minister to its pleasure.

Nor is it intended by what we have said, or may say, to give an *undefined license* to the use of instruments in Divine worship. Nothing could be further from the intention of the writer, or more repugnant to his feelings. In fixing the limits of their use, much will depend upon the *habits* and *taste* of the neighbourhood and congregation, and the *scientific* and *practical* skill and *moral* cha-

racter of the performers. Stringed instruments, such as the *violin, bass viol, and violoncello,* are favourites. The *clarionet* is a rash domineering instrument, while the *flute* is sweet and delicate. The *horn* and *trumpet,* where temperately used in a large choir, add great mellowness and fulness to the music. The *trombone* has latterly come in for a good share of practice, which most likely will sooner increase than diminish. But the *organ* is the prince of instruments and one of rising fame. It has not only poured its torrents of sound down the vaulted aisles of the venerable cathedrals and larger class of parish churches, but its majestic tones are often heard in the chapels of dissenters and Methodists. And it has several considerations to recommend it. Its extent of scale and volume of sound is so great, that it is an ample substitute for a number of other instruments. It may not improperly be called legion. And this is an important qualification where there is a scarcity of musicians and singers; and even where there is a sufficiency of such aid, it saves the anxiety of having to do with a great number of individuals, as well as the fear of giving offence to a class of persons who, it must be confessed, are generally difficult to please.

An organ may be termed a servant of all-work; and in some places where it has been introduced it has certainly thrown a number of hands out of employ. In some cases where *twentieth-rate*

musicians have been employed, it is difficult to say, with such an alteration, whether the event has given greater mortification to the performers, or joy to the hearers. It also prevents the congregation, and still more the officers of the church, from the fear of being disappointed in persons to conduct the choral service; for if the organist be in his place, there will generally be found so many voices to join, as to cause that part of Divine worship to pass on without any unpleasant discrepancy. Besides, other advantages attend the organ. By its supplying the place of several instruments, it reduces the business-like attention, which is sometimes paid in excess, in adjusting and tuning the instruments over, and thereby—especially when thoughtlessly and paradingly done—distracting the attention of the congregation, and marring the spirit of devotion. This is of some consideration, in regard to those persons who look upon the whole tribe of instruments as there on sufferance, and who construe every little irregularity on their part as the signal for war.

The organ seems not so well adapted for small buildings as for large ones. For in some places, by its producing too much sound, it has the effect rather of burdening than of assisting the efforts of vocal melody. It seeks for an ample range of dominion, where its majestic voice can swell out its commanding influence to the most distant ear, and lead forth the aspirations of thousands.

CHAPTER III.

MELODY AND HARMONY.

Definitions of harmony and melody—the harmony of sounds must have been perceived from the earliest period, conjectured from many considerations—systemized by Franco—the difficulties of bringing it to perfection noticed—Franklin, Lord Kaimes, Professor Robinson, &c., opinions on harmony—difficulty of harmonizing some airs—Rolfe's hypothesis quoted—harmony adapted to the varieties of the human voice—Watson, Addison, and Dryden, opinions quoted—the management of the several parts of a tune—some of our sweetest pleasures of music occasioned by harmony.

MELODY and harmony are words so agreeable in sound, and call up such delightful associations of sentiment and feeling, that, angry disputation on their respective merits, seems an unhallowed intrusion into their own mellifluent province. From the testimony of their own native voices, they themselves agree in the chords of unity. And the spirit of this unity breathes in all the descriptions of the musician, poet, orator, and painter; they are interchangeably and promiscuously used, and pressed into varied service, to any thing that is expressive of sweet and pure emotions. Nevertheless these two words have a distinct, though a friendly meaning, and characterize certain classifications of

musical sound, to which, and other matters pertaining to their nature and use, we shall call the attention of the reader in the spirit of our theme.

In the popular use of these terms, *melody*, means one single strain of successive musical tones; such as a tune having but one part, without any accompaniment, either vocal or instrumental. Harmony is the co-existence, or combination of two or more of such strains. Hence we say a tune has two, three, or four parts, and accompaniments, which may be either vocal or instrumental. Hence also an air is said to be *harmonized* when other parts are added to it.

Now the *date* when these classifications were first adopted, and the *merit* of their use, are subjects on which opinion is divided. It is asserted by the advocates of melody, that harmony is of late invention; and therefore unknown to the ancients, by whose music such amazing effects are said to have been produced. It will be readily granted that melody preceded harmony, as in every successive musical creation it must ever precede it, as the eldest child of a family, or, as in the progressive series of numbers, *one* must have existence before two or three. But to say that harmony in its simplest forms, and rudest conceptions, was unknown to the ancients, cannot but excite the surprise of all persons who have paid any attention to the theory of music, and the estimation in which it has been held by all ages and nations.

That faculty of the mind by which we appreciate harmony, cannot be considered either of temporary or local existence; or naturalized by the force of habit or education. It is the native offspring of the soul, and inseparable from (partaking it is true less or more, of) the elements of poetry, though nourished it must be admitted, and brought to different degrees of perfection, by the aids of science and practice.

If this view be correct, can we imagine that this faculty would have lain dormant in the bosoms of hundreds of millions of persons, during the vast sweep of the first four or five thousand years of the world? It is true the improvements in science, in the multiplication of musical instruments, and the extension, and the precision on which the theory of music is graduated, has offered greater encouragement and facilities for its development than could have been presented in former ages. Still, as we are assured they had *instruments*, and *voice*, and *ear;* and were in other respects essentially constituted like the moderns, we cannot but think, they must at one time or another, either intentionally or by accident, have simultaneously struck on chords, which would have excited a desire to repeat those harmonious sounds; and being so repeated, would naturally tend to their perfection and perpetuation.

This might have been the case, particularly when musicians were practising together, either

in sober or fanciful mood; when curiosity would be upon the alert to make some fresh discovery; or, such object might have been effected by the inflexions and divergings of voices when singing together.

Since harmony has been systematically pursued, opinion has varied as to the degree of perfection possessed by certain chords. But the concord of the *octave* has never been disputed; and as it was no doubt the practice then, as now, for persons not nicely tuned to music, but yet anxious to take a part in the exercise, to drag on in an octave below the air; it could not but lead to observation, reproof, and variety, in the combination of sounds amongst those who, though at times few might be the number, were concerned in the improvement of their favourite theme.

In pursuing this result, the expense, time, and learning were not required, as in making discoveries in many other branches of science; the means were ever at hand for making experiments.

Our wonder is the more excited on this point, when we turn our attention to David, and his musical coadjutors,—choirs which poured their music from hundreds of voices, and thousands of instruments; who would be stimulated by so skillful and generous a patron, and aroused among themselves by honourable competion, to make every possible variation in tone, modulation, and cadence; with all degrees, in the volume of sound, from the

most soft and liquid tone in the female voice, to the crash and thunder of a hundred drums and trumpets, in order to give their music every attraction to the assembled multitudes. One can scarcely bring the mind to believe, that among so great a number of performers, and fired with so much musical enthusiasm, *harmony* would not have been discovered,—that they would all sing and play in *unison*.

But however unwilling, conjecture and opinions formed upon analogy, such as we have been putting forth, must lie in abeyance; as no documentary evidence can be produced, to prove the existence of *harmony* as a theory, either amongst the ancient Jews or Heathens.

"Franco is the first upon record who entertained the idea of counter-point, an art which has since experienced gradual and imperceptible improvements, far exceeding the powers of any one individual. The term counter-point, or *contra punctum*, denotes its etymology and import. Musical notation, was at one time performed by small points; and the present mode is only an improvement of that practice. Counter-point, therefore, denotes the notation of harmony, or music in parts, by points opposite to each other."*

The invention of the organ afforded a greater development to the principles of counter-point,

* London Ency. Art. Music, p.280.

than that of any other instrument with which we are acquainted; though doubtless other instruments might have contributed some aid. The minor third, as in the note immediately preceding the close on the major key of C, was originally a favourite chord. A fourth below the key and a fifth above, by degrees became admissible; though principally in the chant and recitative, where several notes preceded, in succession on the same letter. Hence this method of harmonizing, or counter-pointing, gave rise to the names of descant double, treble, quadruple, &c.

"In the infancy of musical composition, men saw but a little way into the latent sources of harmonic combinations; rules were formed upon few and narrow principles, derived from monotonous and insipid compositions, when timidity was feeling its way in the dark, and when every deviation from the first contrapuntist was thought licentious. However men were too great friends to the pleasure of the ear, not to encourage such happy licences as those with which Monteverde was charged; and since that time, every fortunate breach of an *old rule* seems to be regarded as the establishment of a *new* one; by which means the code is so enlarged, that we may now pronounce almost every thing to be allowable in musical composition, that does not offend cultivated ears."*

* Rees's Ency. Art. Music.

There is in some persons a fastidious, exclusive, though no doubt an honest regard for melody, who are unaware of the hidden rules which govern their choice. For the laws on which harmony is founded, are not without their influence in the construction of melody. Now the value of every succeeding note in an air, may be said to be entirely *relative;* deriving its importance from the position it occupies in regard to the preceding, and except it be the last, succeeding note. When a sound is made, the ear pertinaciously retains the pitch for some time, and the following sounds are agreeable or otherwise, according to the pitch they occupy in the scale of the key. And this comparative principle is not confined to two notes in immediate succession, but extends to several, especially if they be emphatic sounds; as well indeed with the reference they all bear to the mode, or key, in which the music is cast. Of course this test of agreement will be more or less correctly ascertained, as the persons may have a good or bad ear.

It was under the laws, of what may be termed *successive harmony*, that Dr. Franklin, in his letter to Lord Kaimes, contends that the best of the Scotch melodies are formed; and which is the reason of their being such favourites with people of all ages and nations. He says, "Now the construction of the old Scotch melodies is this, that almost every succeeding emphatical note is a third, a fifth, an octave, or some note that is in concord

with the preceding note. Thirds are chiefly used, which are very pleasing concords." Though this rule of Dr. Franklin is entitled to respect, it cannot be adopted without leaving room for ample exceptions; as it is well known there are many delightful melodies, which do not move so precisely by thirds, and fifths. But with that reduction, it still leaves considerable weight of argument for harmonic succession.

It is a matter of controversy with some musicians, who contemplate man in the undeveloped elements of his nature, whether to him in that state, harmony is equally agreeable as melody. The *negative* to this proposition, has been maintained by a reference to uncivilized nations, as preferring generally simple strains of music. Supposing such to be the case, the want of education, and the aids of science to draw out the powers of genius, is a consideration fraught with many *affirmative* suggestions. It has been well observed, that, "An uncultivated taste, has a narrow circle of enjoyments." In such a state there is the seed, but it requires to be enwrapt, and nourished by congenial elements, in order that it may vegetate, expand, and bring forth fruit. There is the organization, both mental and physical,—the *receptive* and *executive* capacity; but knowledge is wanting to teach the use of such hidden and dormant faculties. The absence of an object, is no proof that a desire for it does not exist; and even the desire may be often completely unde-

finable to its possessor in consequence of the darkness in which it is involved.*

It should be deliberately recollected, that in this as in other cases, habit has a most despotic government. In a rude state of society, where melody is chiefly heard, or altogether so, it may be expected that its suffrages will be more numerous than those presented to harmony, when its pleasures become known. "Similar considerations apply to children. They learn on their mother's knee to like melody; but were they as early accustomed to listen to the sounds of consonant thirds, and fifths, we see no reason to doubt, that they would like them as soon as sounds in pleasing succession. Without resting on such remarkable instances as those of Mozart, or Crotch," (to whom we may add Charles and Samuel Wesley), "who delighted in harmonious sounds from their earliest infancy, we will venture to state as a fact, well known to those who have bestowed any observation on the subject, that children who have an opportunity of hearing

* Professor Robinson, in the Encyclopedia Britannica, boldly asserts, that, "To this day the most uncultivated boar in the Russian empire, would be ashamed to sing in unison. He listens a while to a new tune, holding his chin to his breast; and as soon as he has got a notion of it, he bursts out in concert, throws in the harmonic notes by a certain rule which he feels, but cannot explain. His harmonies are generally alternate major and minor thirds, and he seldom misses the proper cadence, on the fifth and key."

concordant sounds, very soon experience great pleasure from them. In addition to these considerations, others, of a more technical nature, may be pointed out as establishing the same conclusion. It may be shown, for example, that pleasing harmonical combinations produce a pleasure of a similar kind, when the notes, of which the harmony consists, are thrown into a melody, or series of single sounds."

As to the question, whether all airs or melodies admit of harmonious accompaniments, it is one that has received very different answers, even from those most competent to judge. A writer,* from whom we have borrowed the preceding extract, observes, that, "Every practical musician is aware that the connexion between melody and harmony is of the most intimate kind; and that every melody that is really good, however unartificial in its structure, is perfectly susceptible of receiving additional beauty from good harmony. The pleasure which we receive from good harmony is as natural, (or as much derived from our constitution) as that which is produced from melody."

Others there are, who think differently; contending that there are melodies that cannot be *systematically* harmonized. And certainly it will appear evident to persons of ordinary musical attainments, that many airs receive slender assist-

* See Edinburgh Review, vol. lxxvii. p. 74.

ance from accompaniments, and especially if they be numerous. And this difficulty is not peculiar to the bass, or any upper part; each in their turns are graceful or monagramic attendants;—such airs seeming either too eccentric, or delicate, to find suitable partners, in the whole community of music. From the principles on which Rameau founded his theory of *fundamental bass*, many airs could not possibly be harmonized, on account of the gaping, abrupt, ungraceful intervals which must necessarily occur. But his theory has generally, it seems, of late years been rejected, for one of a more flexible and agreeable nature. The main principles of harmonies appear to be *absolute* and universal; yet in the detail, in the filling up, and the operations of the outer works of the system, there is room for consistent variety, and successful improvement.

In coming to decisions on the principles, and use of harmonies, we may humbly suggest, that we should take for our guidance and imitation the works of the great masters of the art, leaving at the same time, room for the openings and efforts of brilliant, though it may be of obscure and youthful genius. Such distinguished individuals, to whom we have had frequent occasion to refer, from the attention which they have paid to the science, and their constitutional perceptions of what is beautiful, sublime, and impressive, in the succession and combination of sounds,—rejecting the lines and

land-marks of other systems, have given a license to the ardour of their imagination, and branching out into untrodden paths, have given harmony, in new positions, "a habitation and a name." Such adventures, may often be both reckless and untenable; yet it is clear, as we have previously intimated in this chapter, that what has in many cases been looked upon as an unwarrantable effort, has in time become an established rule of the art.

The magic influence which consolidates the friendly relations of harmony in all their various movements, can neither be dissolved nor penetrated, and too spiritual in its nature to be traced out by the stiff rules of art.*

The introduction, or rather the development of harmony, is supposed by many writers to have added nothing to the proper effects of music; but has, on the contrary, spread difficulties around its

* An ingenious, and certainly a natural view is taken of the relative character of harmony and melody, by Mr. J. Rolfe, in his attempt to point out "The Analogy between the elementary parts of a language, and those of the musical system." He observes, "Sounds have the same intimate connexion in their harmonic construction, that words have in their *grammatical.* As *words* form grammatical sentences, so *sounds* form harmonic sentences; each language has both its essential and relative terms, and each admits of both *prosaic* and *rhythmical* construction. *Melody* and *harmony* in the musical system, are but the correspondent terms to singular and plural in the grammatical; that their general acceptation in each is precisely the same is sufficiently obvious."—Lucidus Ordo, p. 72.

practice, and clogged its operations. To this opinion Mr. Watson inclines, when he thus expresses himself, "In those ages when poetry and music jointly produced their most powerful effects, the artificial refinements of modern times were not resorted to. Harmony or counter-point was unknow n; and the effect was produced by the sweetness and simplicity, or the nobleness and spirit of the air, giving emphasis to the conceptions of the poet, by corresponding with them. There is an immutable truth in nature, and it is in the melody, or air, that we are still to look for the true power of music to excite emotion and to give effect to poetry." *

The grist of the argument advanced in this extract, is, that one single strain, or part of music, formed on nature's truest principles, is more really effective for all the purposes of music and poetry, than two, or more parts, formed on similar principles. To this conclusion, without mental reservation and exception, we cannot conscientiously subscribe. It would be like signing a death-warrant to some of our sweetest and purest pleasures; and a law founded upon it, would instantly be at war with the brightest efforts of genius, and the creations which have enlarged the boundaries of our existence.

Indeed to banish harmony from the hymnology

* Introduction to Wesley's Sacred Harmony, and Works, vol. VIII. p. 321.

of our congregational worship, would be to stifle a large and valuable portion of the human voice. Many a deep, rich, mellow voice, that rolls its majestic swell through our churches and chapels, on which the upper strains float, and with which they mingle like the ripples and spray of the ocean, when its bosom is animated with a sunny breeze, must be coerced into silence and rest; or, if bass voices must sing the air in unison, it will be a laborious effort, like tearing up its organization; and generally when performed, will only add *noise* in the place of music. Surely our Creator, in making the human organs capable of such a variety and compass of intonation, could not but intend them to be used for his praise and the delight of his creatures; but which cannot be done, save on the principle of harmony.*

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* The principles of harmony, both mathematically and metaphysically considered, entered extensively into the philosophical systems of the ancients. It was made the bond of union, and the perpetual source of pleasures in the *heavenly bodies*. This doctrine was first taught by Pythagorus, who says, "their movements are in *harmony*, and highly melodious, but impossible to be heard by human ears." This idea Addison has embodied in sublime poetic dress, and in strict accordance with Christian sentiment, when he speaks of the movements of the heavenly bodies in the illimitable concave of heaven:

> "For ever singing as they shine,
> The hand that formed us is divine."

But Dryden has given greater amplitude and sublimity to the

subordinate to the air, and the alto still more so. This part is a valuable addition, when the voice is sweet, flexible, and melting, and when brought out with taste and judgment. It should be heard like distant aerial warblings; which, dissolving and mingling with every part of the diapasons, and losing itself in the rolling bass below, produce in the soul delightful and awful sensations.

No, we cannot part with *harmony*, whatever praises may be bestowed on ancient melodies; every proper view of its nature and use, presents many arguments which harmonize in its favour. The theory of harmony has extended the field of music, and called into action every variety of voice. By it a part of one of Dr. Watts's verses is rendered more emphatic:

> "Ten *thousand thousand* are our *tongues*,
> But all our joys are *one*."

Every person that has an ear and a voice, may thus with ease fall into one of the parts of a tune, and thereby glorify God with his bodily organs, as well as with his spiritual powers, which are both his.

What delightful associations of thought and feeling are awakened in referring to particular seasons; when the theme of scriptural discourse was impressive; its ministrations enlightened and vigorous; the congregation large and attentive;—when the singing broke forth in harmonious strains

from a thousand voices, in all the forms of seraphic zeal;—did we not for a space of time forget that we were the inhabitants of a discordant world, and fancy ourselves the entranced beings of a purer state, where,

—"Him day and night
Th' united choirs of angels sing."

Nor can we forget those select and domestic seasons, of a specially devout character, when instrument and voice harmoniously vied with each other, to enhance the pleasure of the party,—a pleasure which threw a charm over domestic cares, and which lives, and will still live, in the recollection we trust, till it mingles as one, with the music of the blessed in heaven.

Can we then with these impressions in favour of harmony, open our congregational music books, and after looking deliberately at the *Old Hundred* tune, *Windsor*, *Sicilian Mariners*, *Behemoth*, *Sprowston Lodge*, *St. David's*, *Arabia*, *Dryden's*, *Shirland*, and others too numerous to mention—we ask, can we take the dissecting knife, and cruelly sever the parts asunder, leaving nothing alive but the naked air, to mourn its bereavement? No, "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

CHAPTER IV.

PLAIN PSALMODY, CHANT, FUGUE, ANTHEM, AND CHOIR.

The chant used by the first Christians—attempts to fix the meaning of Recitativo, Anthem, Psalm, Hymn, and Song — the Hymns which our Saviour and his Disciples sung considered—Antiphonal form of singing noticed—Pagan music early introduced into the church—Anthemic music defended by many considerations—many persons not able to appreciate it—various objections met—Rev. C. Wesley's defence of it quoted—Richd. Baxter and J. Wesley quoted—mode of singing by the Wesleyans, Independents, Church of England, in America, Scotland, &c. — Musical Festivals considered — distinguished singers noticed.

In this chapter we shall consider music in the character of *plain psalmody*, the *chant*, the *fugue*, and *anthem*. All these forms, or styles of music, are more or less cultivated; and the three latter are the source of great delight to many, while to others they are productive of disgust. Appeals have been made by all parties to the usages of the ancient Christians. But the answers from that quarter, are not sufficient to satisfy enquiry, and to allay the spirit of controversy. It may be affirmed however, we think, on solid ground, that music was practised in all the above forms, allowing for shades of variations, in the earliest ages of

the church. It is especially the case with regard to the *chant*, both in its simple and florid character. We are informed by Eusebius, who lived in the third century, that at that time, "There was common consent in *chanting* forth the praises of God." And, though no mention is made in scripture, definitely of this mode of singing, yet it is the opinion of eminent commentators, and writers on Jewish customs, that it was practised by the Jews. One writer asserts, "that what was at first called singing, was no more than a *recitative*, or solemn mode of reading or repeating the words." But from what we know of the instruments, and performances of Hebrew music, we are quite at liberty to infer that much of their music was of a more free and elastic description.

The *recitative* was rather the tone in which they made known the law, than that in which the Psalms were sung; a sort of an elevated pitch of speaking; perhaps not inaptly represented by the *sing-song* tone in which many of the Quaker preachers deliver their discourses, and offer up their prayers.* When the Psalms were composed, many of them were no doubt set to music by David, or by some other eminent musician; the music of course intended to correspond with, and

* In this reference to the preachers of this body of Christians, there is not the slightest intention of censuring or even passing an opinion on their mode of preaching, but merely for *illustration.*

aid the meaning of the words. This music then, so far as *design* and *plan* is concerned, is essentially the same with what we understand by the modern *anthem*. If this conclusion be admitted, notwithstanding the opposition with which it is assailed, this species of music may very properly plead the sanction of scripture.

In the New Testament, three different words are made use of, to describe the exercise of music in praising God; — *psalms*, *hymns*, and *songs*, or *spiritual songs*.* Though these words are promiscuously introduced, in general discourse on praising the Lord, without endangering their meaning or use, yet on reference to their original purpose they had a *definite*, and *separate* meaning. Beza thinks the word *psalm*, as used by the Apostles, denotes those poetical compositions in which David uttered his own complaints and prayers; also those metrical historical narrations by which he instructed the people; and that *hymns* are his other effusions in which he especially celebrated the praises of God. Extius understands by *spiritual songs*, those compositions which were dictated to the leading and spiritual men in the church by the Holy Ghost, as mentioned in 1 Cor. xiv. 26, and which after they had been delivered to the members of the church, were committed to memory by some, and to writing by others. Of this kind

* Eph. v. 19, 20. Col. iii. 16.

he supposes the songs of Elizabeth, Mary, and Zacharias to have been.* The same author is of opinion that the Ephesians were directed to sing *alternately*, a custom which was early practised in the Christian church. In these views Dr. Macknight seems to concur.†

But perhaps the more popular and safe meanings given to these terms, are, that by *psalm* was included that music which had been put to those metrical, or prose compositions, which had been used in the Jewish church, and which were still suitable for Christian worship; and by *hymns*, more recent effusions of a purely spiritual and experimental character; and by *song*, was understood, music adapted to the *ode*, which was of a more dignified and discursive kind of composition, and gave greater opportunity for venting the various emotions of the soul.

We are informed by the sacred historians, that our Saviour with his Disciples sung a *hymn* on the evening before he suffered. But though called a hymn, it was doubtless a part of the pascal service of the Jews, which was composed of psalms from the one hundred and thirteenth, to the one hundred and eighteenth, inclusive, and peculiarly appropriate to that mournful occasion. It is highly probable, according to Martini, that the first Christians made use of the choral service of the temple.

* Luke i. 42. 46, 47. † See his Notes on Eph. v. 19, 20.

Yet the *song* style of singing, in its various branches, was also cultivated, and extensively so, at an early period.

The practice of singing by antiphony, that is, in turn one after another, first one part of the congregation and then another, was common in the first ages of the church; to which an author just quoted refers. This mode of singing, if not introduced, was much sanctioned by St. Ignatius, a disciple of St. John, who is said to have formed the first regular Christian choir. Pliny says, "the Christians assembled before day break, to sing *alternate* hymns to Christ and God." Philo, in writing about a certain class of Christians, says, that "after supper their songs begin; when all are risen, they select from the rest of the choirs, one of men, and one of women, in order to celebrate some festival; and from each of these a person of majestic form, and well skilled in music, is chosen to lead the band. They then chant hymns in honour of God, composed in different measures and modulations, now singing together, and now answering each other by turns."*

* A specimen of this kind of singing, was practised some years ago, in many of the rural districts of England, among the Methodists, and indeed still is. In one of the Society's meetings, such as a love-feast, or general band-meeting, or at times at a prayer-meeting, the male part of the congregation rise at once, and boldly strike up,

"Sisters can't you rise and tell
The glories of Emanuel?" &c.

But besides the *antiphonal* form of singing, it is manifest that the *fugue*, and the *chorus*, must have formed part of the service; which was nourished, or suppressed, as Christian zeal, talent, and taste, afforded their facilities. This may be inferred from the character of the music in pagan countries, where Christianity was first planted and flourished; as well as from the charge frequently brought against the ancient Christians, by writers not over

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When they have finished the stanza, they sit down, and the females simultaneously rise, and answer in the same strain,

"Yes, bless the Lord, we can rise and tell
The glories of Emanuel," &c.

When this is ended, both parties join in chorus:

"Glory be to the Lord most high;
We mean to praise him till we die,
And after death sing glory," &c.

This may be considered a pretty faithful illustration of this ancient custom of magnifying the grace of God in songs of praise. And who will venture to assert, that this mode of singing, when judiciously managed, is either unscriptural, or uncongenial with the tone of feeling of that person, whose heart glows with the love of God, and who delights to echo the words of David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." This practice, however, may easily become degraded, and decidedly objectionable, by the practice of weak and over sanguine persons. Such was the case anciently. St. Athanasius condemned the Milesians, "For having the Psalms of David in an indecent manner, accompanying the sacred music with the clapping of hands, with jumping, and with the sound of bells attached to a cord."

much attached to music in any of its forms, for allowing pagan music to enter the church. That they did so admit it, is more than probable; which will appear, amongst others, from the testimony of Dr. Burney. He says, "It is probable the music of the hymns which were first received into the church, where paganism prevailed, resembled that which had been many ages used in the temple worship of the Greeks and Romans. Of this the versification of those hymns afford an indisputable proof, as it by no means resembles those of the Psalms, or of any other Hebrew poetry; and examples may be found in all the breviaries, missals, and antiphonies, ancient and modern, of every species of versification which has been practised by the Greek and Roman poets, particularly the lyric, such as the Alcmænian, Alcaic, Sapphic, &c."

This was a fruit which naturally grew out of the rapid and extensive spread of the Christian religion, as well as from the soil in which it flourished. For, as the Greeks and Romans became converts to Christianity, those of them which were skilled in music, could not but bring their capabilities and attainments in the science with them, and would be likely to employ it as an agreeable and attractive mode of worshipping God.

And here, we ask, why should this be deemed an act of profanation? We gladly take lessons from the orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, to render our pulpit ministrations more effective.

We read the works of Homer and Virgil with deathless enthusiasm, as the purest and deepest springs of poetry; which the vast number of poets, extending through a line of more than two thousand years, have not been able to lay dry. And their architecture adds dignity and beauty to our churches and chapels, consecrated to the worship of God. Why then should not those bold melting Grecian strains have been admitted, which owed not their recommendation to local habits or national prescriptions, but, as being the genuine offspring of nature, and as such, finding a welcome in every breast, open to the charms of music.

In pursuance of our plan, we shall now consider more particularly the present styles of music, in the laudatory part of Divine worship; which may be comprised in the one part, of *plain hymn*, or *psalm tunes;* and in the other, of *anthems*, in their more naked, or decorated character. The observations which we have made on melody, in contradistinction, and preference to harmony, will apply to plain tunes considered with anthems. They have to do more with the plain and simple truth of the science, and are dealt out in smaller portions. Hence they are adapted to those who have but little taste for, or skill in the performance of music, as well as easy and agreeable exercises for those of superior attainments. On this undisputed point we need not dwell, or expend illustration; but hasten to where opinion varies, and recrimina-

tion is unsparingly dealt out, on the practise of *set* music in Christian worship.

And what are the considerations favourable to *piece music?* If this question be addressed to the amateurs and professors in the science, and the great composers, who in their musical flight, have held companionship with the sublime conceptions of our first poets, the arguments in answer will be numerous, and decisive in their estimation; more so indeed than what will be admitted as genuine, in the balances of the sanctuary. But to change the figure, notwithstanding it be necessary to put a brake on the speed, with which this class of persons come to a conclusion, no impartial investigation can take place on this subject, without the benefit of their company.

Besides the no inconsiderable sanction derived from scripture and prescriptive authority, the advocates for piece music, deem their advocacy tenable, on the ground of *analogy* and *Christian philosophy.* They reason this way, that if music is a gift of God, and can be properly employed in civil, social, and military life, to give effect to suitable sentiment, passion, and practice; it is equally right and proper to employ it in developing the germinations of the Christian character, in giving a charm to Christian duty, and to the promises of the gospel in Divine worship. But it is asked, can this end be fully answered by singing? for instance, a common metre hymn, in a common metre tune, simply

because it is a *common metre tune*,—even admitting that there is a regard to the general character of the hymn. It is contended, that in order to give the music full scope and effect, it ought to be *minutely adapted to the particular meaning of the words*, both in its *composition* and *performance*.

And how far can this view be supported by analogy? This rule certainly displays its authority, in the ministrations of the pulpit. No preacher at all concerned to discharge his duties effectively, will reject its influence. Let the reader picture to his view, the eloquent preacher, tremblingly alive to the responsibility of his station, and plying every talent and art within his command that he may give full proof of his ministry. Will he forget the management of his voice? No. If the subject be animated, his voice will be light, strong, and rapid; if mournful, it will issue in grave and measured tones, and tremble and die away beneath its load of sorrow; and if the subject be awful and terrific, we shall be sure to be apprized of it, by the depth, and hurry, and volume of voice by which it is pursued; and the lowering of the eye-brows, the stern glance of the eye, and the sombre cast of countenance, will be found willing coadjutors in giving force to the description. So Cowper speaks of such a preacher:

> " His gentle eye
> Grew stern, and darted a severe rebuke;

His frown was full of terror, and his voice
Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe
As left him not, till penitence had won
Lost favour back again, and healed the breach."

And even in the more solemn exercise of prayer, the modulation, strength, and cadence of the voice, often we know, equally display the emotions of the heart.

And how do we estimate good poetry? and what gives it such hold of our attention, and dominion over our heart? If the subject is agreeable, it is rendered still more so, by the beautiful structure of the verse, the harmony of the rhythm, the choice appropriation of language to the progressive development of the sentiment; for,

"Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable."

Thus every thought and passion of the character represented, seems to breathe, and throb, and glow with life, and is the more welcome to our society from the attractions with which it is invested. Then take the same rule with you, in testing the capabilities of music; afford her the same facilities in developing her powers, if you would delight in the delicacy and sweetness of her strains, and feel the full benefit of her services; for,

"Music resembles poetry; in each
Are nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master's hand alone can reach."

The compositions of such "master hands" of song,

with others of various degrees of inferior merit, have often delighted Christian audiences, and have given a meaning and an energy to the words, of which before they had no adequate conception.

Scripture furnishes subjects for every style of music; some of which have often been selected for that purpose. We might instance the memorable event of the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; several parts of the book of Job; in the ample range of the Psalms, Isaiah, and others of the prophets; the history of, and references to the death, resurrection, ascension, and triumphs of the Redeemer; as well as in the beautiful, sublime, and awfully majestic scenes which pass before our vision in the book of the Revelations. In many of the portions above referred to, the musicians have caught the inspiration of the sacred penman, with all the accuracy of a faithful engraver; and the music comes upon us as the natural and impressive language of the theme. Nor has music been confined to scripture language, on which to exercise his powers; but has often been charmingly united in wedlock with choice portions of odes and hymns from the families of some of our best poets;—such as, "Vital spark of heavenly flame," &c., "Before Jehovah's awful throne," &c., "When I survey the wondrous cross," &c.

Efforts such as these, in which piety, judgment, and eminent musical skill are employed to increase the amount of human happiness, are eloquently,

and commendably set forth by the Rev. R. Watson, when he says, "Powerful emotions of joy seek for outward expression. This is one of the laws of our very nature. The expression will be suitable to the emotion. Grief pours forth its wailing; joy is heard in the modulations of verse, and the sweet swell and cadence of music. One reason for this, is, that thus our joy may be social. The shout of one warrior animates another. The song of one labourer cheers another as well as himself in their mutual toil. The song of victory in one part of the field stimulates the combatants, where the battle is yet doubtful; and the common chorus heightens the common triumph. In heaven all is social, all is action and re-action. There is song in heaven because there is joy there; joy too strong to be confined to the heart. It must not only be felt, but sung; not only sung, but sung in chorus, rising, till the voice is 'as the voice of many waters, as the voice of a great thunder.'"*

But however congenial such a style of music may be to the feelings of persons who could take wing with the above description, many others there are who can take no pleasure in such a performance. The song may be as tender as ever issued from female lips:

> "Like the sweet south,
> That breathes upon a bed of violets,
> Stealing and giving odours."

* Watson's Works, vol. iii. p. 109, 110.

The chorus may be bold and dignified, softened with the "resonent fugue;" by turns abrupt, fitful, and impetuous; yet every part full of emulation, and triumph, till the united effort seems,

> "Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
> As from blest voices uttering joy;"

and then in simultaneous and unrestrained raptures of bliss, seem ascending from dull mortal ears, into their own etherial regions; while,

> "The last lingering undulation
> Dies on the doubting ear,"

of the entranced listener. All this falls upon the ears of the class of persons of whom we are speaking with no more emotion, than would be produced by the commonest sounds, that issue from the multitudes of the "babbling earth" They unceremoniously pass sentence of condemnation on *this noble* class of music; but to make a show of some taste and discrimination, they invidiously grant life and liberty to *common tunes;* though in reality, in nine cases out of ten, the true merits of which they are incapable of appreciating.

But does the ignorance of letters and language, prove that no pleasurable meaning lives in those significant symbols? Or, does the ignorance of the creative powers of numbers, at all discredit the certain results arising from the legitimate combinations of figures? The mathematician and grammarian will answer, No. So with equal propriety

and honesty, the musician may assert the mingled pleasures he derives from following the talismanic directions of musical characters, as he roams over the extending boundaries of the science. But it is not to be expected that those persons in whose souls no repository is found for the stores of music, can estimate practically the rich pleasures of those persons who inhale, and reverberate "gushes of sweet sound."

As to the objection of many people to this kind of music, that it is a notorious breach of our Lord's command, when he says, "Use not vain repetition," it is not entitled to much attention. When this objection is urged by religious persons, in a tone of affectionate regard for the injunctions of the Saviour, it clearly acquires a form of truth which is not supported by dispassionate investigation. Where this objection, often so vehemently urged, is accompanied with equal sincerity, mere suggestion it is presumed may serve the purpose of formal refutation. We may observe, that the most hallowed praises, and the most effectual prayers have been offered to heaven by scripture saints, incorporated in a *repetition* of impressive language. And the experience of the best of Christians now, whether in their elevated or depressed seasons, leads them to reiterate again, and again, those words which best express the feelings of their heart. Nor can the extension of the empire of language, in meaning, force, and beauty, be referred to, but as adding

weight to the argument against the objection now under notice; inasmuch as by a judicious selection of words, a greater prominency is given to the connexion that exists between the emotions of the mind, and the medium through which they are conveyed. "*Vain* repetitions" there may be in musical *compositions*, as in other religious literary efforts. "*Vain* repetitions" there also may be in the *performance* of music; but that is no more the fault of well composed music, than is an irreverent use of excellent forms and modes of prayer. The Rev. Charles Wesley formed a fitting apology for such *anti*-musical characters, and which it would be well for all lovers of music to accept in the same bland temper in which it is given:

"Men of true piety, they know not why,
Music, with all its sacred powers, decry,
Music itself (not its abuse) condemn,
For good or bad is just the same to them.
But let them know, they quite mistake the case,
Defect of nature for excess of grace;
And, while they reprobate th' harmonious art,
Blam'd, we excuse, and candidly assert,
The fault is in their ears, not in their upright hearts."

It is manifest from all this, that it would not be proper to press this style of singing into the general service of the church. Indeed it would be a food too delicious for the welfare of the spiritual life of those who could relish it. And for the mass, *congregational singing* is the aliment by which they will abound most in the "joy of the Lord."

Besides it would not be proper to gratify one part at the expense of another, when both have equal claims. The refinements and dignity of science, must bend to the prejudices of the weak, when eternal interests are at stake. Singers as well as preachers must be content to be reckoned "fools for Christ's sake," if they would truly consecrate their talents to the service of the sanctuary,—a lesson generally very difficult for singers and musicians to learn; for certainly *self-esteem* is a *bump*, and a family weakness, very prominent amongst the sons of Apollo.

Congregational singing is supported, in decided opposition to anthems, by many ministers of the gospel, of undoubted piety, comprehensive knowledge, and musical taste, whose opinions are, notwithstanding, entitled to the respect of all singers. Collisions on this matter have often taken place between preachers and choirs. For instance, in some places, on especial occasions, it is customary for the singers to give what they deem appropriate anthems, in order to gratify the congregation, and promote the object of the meeting. It has sometimes happened that the opinion of the preacher has not harmonized with that of the singers, and he has interposed his authority in a *manner* so abrupt and humiliating, that wounds have been made, which many years have not been able to heal. A minister may deliberately, and in his conscience believe it to be wrong to sing piece music in public worship; and

he may righteously interpose his authority, for its suppression, within the limits of his jurisdiction; but certainly, his individual conviction, cannot make the *rule absolute*, in the face of scripture and usage. But, though the subject is undoubtedly open for debate, and for an honest difference of opinion, yet all choirs are bound by every Christian consideration, to submit to the voice of the church, in whatever form made known.

The celebrated Richard Baxter, though by no means disposed to cramp the exercise of musical talent, gave a preference to congregational singing. He says, "I think it unlawful to use such strains of music as are light, or as the congregation cannot easily be brought to understand; much on purpose to commit the whole work of singing to the choristers, and exclude the congregation. I am unwilling to join a church where I shall be shut out of this noble work of praise."*

Mr. Wesley's opinion on this point, harmonized with that of the non-conformist. The same love of simplicity and brevity, so observable in his preaching, writings, and all his designs and operations, predominated in his correct ear and fine taste for music. The remarkable manner in which the Methodist societies sprang up, and the sincere and zealous character of the people, made congregation singing for them in that stage of their history,

* Baxter's Works, vol. V. p. 499.

especially appropriate; and as such, if for no other reason, may well be supposed to have obtained Mr. Wesley's warm recommendation. As one specimen of his recorded judgment on this topic, we give the following from his Journals, under date of April 8, 1787, "I preached in Bethesda, Mr. Smyth's new chapel; it is very neat, but not gay; and I believe will hold as many people as West-street chapel. Mr. Smyth read prayers and gave out the hymns, and which were sung by fifteen or twenty fine singers; the rest of the congregation listening with much attention, and as much devotion as they would have done to an opera. But is this Christian worship? Or ought it ever to be suffered in a Christian church?"

The Wesleyan Methodist preachers, in common with their congregation, generally entertain views similar to those of Mr. Wesley;—*generally* we say, for large exceptions there are both among preachers and people. In many of their chapels, with organs, and other instruments of music, *piece music* occasionally finds a skillful performance, and a cheerful reception. Several of the preachers have distinguished themselves as composers of *metre tunes*, as well also as of music set to portions of scripture, and various hymns; amongst whom may be named—Timperley, Beaumont, William Edward Miller, and Josiah H. Walker. Most of them have contributed largely to our stock of tunes, with different degrees of merit.

Congregational singing is encouraged in a somewhat similar manner amongst the Dissenters of the present day, that is, the Baptists and Independents. There appears no classification of authors, running in a line with religious sects; yet in the selection of tunes a difference of choice seems to predominate. The Dissenters generally prefer more grave and solid tunes; seldom introducing those airs transplanted from secular music, which in many places is the practice of the Methodists. The staid and regular manner in which they conduct their society meetings, as well as those for public prayer, is a sufficient barrier against such an innovation, and also against the use of those impassioned and wild strains, so agreeable to an excited state of religious feeling. Perhaps it may be said that they sing in a slower time than the Methodists do. These observations will apply to the different denominations in the United States of America, with but little variation. In the Scotch kirk, the musical part of the Divine service, is said to be performed in a remarkably cold and languid manner.

In the church of England, where the old orthodox, fox-hunting clergy officiate; especially in villages, but little scruple is made either about the style of music, or moral character of the performers. If the music please and attract the congregation, the end of their important service is answered; though that approbation so eagerly sought, will

often be a recommendation to the public house, there to repeat and improve upon what they have so cleverly performed in the church. But this irreligious practice is fast waning away. Among what are termed the evangelical clergy, the spiritual character of their sermons, the sanctity of their lives, and the disposition they manifest to embrace opportunities of doing good, are made to bear upon the singers and singing, as well as upon the mass of their hearers. Congregational singing is now extensively practised in the church.

But amongst that class of tunes termed congregational, there are many very *un*congregational; and as such are liable to objection. Tunes abounding in variations of time, speed, and strength of voice; intricate and complex in the movement of their several parts, either alternately, or by crossing each other's words; indeed all tunes technically called *fuguing*, especially if elaborated, are considered by many unsuitable to the simplicity of congregational worship. Many tunes, cast in this mould, and introduced into our congregations, are utterly worthless; hard, naked, and unnatural strains, having no character, excepting a burlesque on harmony; and no assignable object, save to show the ignorance of their composers, and the bad taste of their performers. Such a style of composition, is often selected by raw amateurs, as proof of superior genius. Persons of this calibre, fancy themselves inspired with sublime strains,

and are impatient to make them known. They must therefore dash off from an eminence. But they soon find, in a general way their resting-place on the spot where they ought to have commenced their flight, and they thereby render their final elevation more doubtful. But when good, tunes with an excess of fugue are not to be recommended for general use. In the first place, from the difficulty of, at least, the less musical part of the assembly, singing them. It would not be in the line of fair argument, to say, that the same objection lies against anthems; for in their performance the congregation *profess* not to join; but keep a temporary silence, for the sake of hearing a superior performance of superior music. But in regard to common tunes they are offered to the congregation, as an act of worship in which they are expected to join; but are frequently prevented by the tunes having too close an alliance with the anthemic style.

But further, in tunes that fugue much, there is often, even when there is tolerable care observed, both in composer and singers, in selection,—a painful misapplication of the music to the words. On this point it may be sufficient to refer to our previous observations, which will readily occur to the reader. But we may say, that the force and beauty of music is often thrown away, in its *runs*, and *holds*, and *swells*,—by giving prominence to weak and unmeaning words; as preposterous as investing beggary with the honours of royalty.

In the prosecution of our task, another subject here arises to view; and the question may be asked, ought CHOIRS to be introduced and allowed in religious assemblies? If we are to pay any regard to the custom of the Jewish church, or to the early Christian church,—for it is said that choirs were introduced by St. Ignatius into the church at Antioch, where the "Disciples were first called Christians;" if we are to adopt the use of means likely to accomplish a given object, then can there be no good objection to well conducted choirs. Others think differently: among whom may be mentioned Dr. Clarke, who accounts choirs of singers but as useless lumber, and something worse, in a Christian assembly; although, he says, "he never had a personal quarrel with singers in any place." This fact is creditable to the Doctor's well known kindness of heart; but it is equally creditable to the peaceable disposition of the singers; especially when it is considered what little value he put upon their services, besides being publicly proclaimed, as "generally proud, self-willed, contentious, and arrogant."

In many places, either from necessity or choice, a *precentor* occupies the place of a choir; that is, *one person* only appointed to begin, and carry on the singing. Such is the practice in many of the churches in Scotland; and among the Presbyterians and Congregationalists of the United States of America, whether of Scotch or German extrac-

tion. But this rule, if it may be so denominated, admits of larger exceptions, perhaps equal to the observance of the rule itself. As there are abundance of large and well ordered choirs, displaying great zeal in acquiring musical knowledge and the cultivation of vocal melody. Nor do the results of their exertions, discredit their efforts to excel. The New England State is the most prolific in good singers. Hence it is common for many singers in the capacity of teachers, to *move* southward in the winter season, and hold singing meetings in the evenings during the season.

A method of learning to read music more fluently, was pursued in America some twenty-five years ago, and indeed may be continued still, which attracted considerable attention. Its peculiarity consisted in the heads of the notes being made in different forms: as round, square, diamond, long square, &c., having as great a diversity in the forms of the notes as there are letters in the gamut, and answering to the routine of solmization. Now the forms in which the heads of the notes were cast, were the indexes of the degrees of acuteness or gravity of sound, which they bore to the key in which the tune was composed. Thus if the square form, for instance, was designed to express a fourth above the key, it would not always occupy the same position in the staff, if the key varied; but would change its position as to acute-

ness and gravity, as the key note occupied a higher or lower position.

This method is somewhat imposing, and certainly offers some advantages; but when contemplated with a view to proficiency, the advantages are more specious than real. And though it may afford some assistance to beginners, and those of small musical capabilities, it should be rejected as a cumbrous crutch by those persons whose comprehensive minds feel the bearing of sounds, and their exact relative position, and are enabled to take a firm and sure step in the performance of music.

As high a value is placed upon the choral service of Christian worship in the United States as in Great Britain, and perhaps a greater encouragement given to it in the northern part of the Union; whether as choirs, or when that service is condensed into the unit of precentor. It is common to get up a concert of sacred music once a year, the proceeds of which often make a handsome remuneration to the choir or precentor, as the case may be.

As to whether a choir or precentor is to be preferred, is a question not entirely of choice; but when so, several obvious reasons present themselves in favour of the former. The great object of a choir should be, which cannot be accomplished by a precentor, not only to produce good singing amongst themselves, but by their *example, to*

encourage, lead, and instruct the congregation to sing in harmony, according to their several capabilities of voice. No person who is at all solicitous for the right execution of this important part of worship, can reasonably object to a choir so constituted and so conducted.

Another branch of musical performance must now be noticed; and one of no small importance, both as regards its influence on the science, as well as on the Christian; we allude to *concerts, musical festivals*, &c. Such institutions have existed in pagan nations from the earliest date; they flourished among the Jews, and have continued to be cherished among Christians, with varying applause and success to the present day. Of late years their number has much increased. In addition to the concerts regularly given at the meetings of several public and spiritedly patronized music societies, some of which we have referred to in a former portion of this work; concerts abound, either of a secular or religious character, in all our large towns or populous villages. The ostensible object of such meetings, is, of course, the improvement, development, and extension of the science, by stimulating composers and performers, both vocal and instrumental, to excel in their several departments. Nor can it be doubted that such purposes have been accomplished. The productions of genius have been original, rich, and varied; and the achievements of instrumental performance,

in tone, compass, and velocity, have exceeded the most sanguine expectations.

The Italian musicians have generally, till lately, borne the palm over those of our country. But English genius has put forth its strength, and its efforts have proved that its spring is not exhausted, or its elasticity broken. So that it is said upon good authority, that "We have performers on every instrument, who rank not only among the first, but as the first of their profession. Mori and Cramer on the violin; the two Linleys on the violoncello; Mackintosh on the bassoon; Wilman on the clarionet; Harper on the trumpet; Nicholson on the flute; with others, that need only to be named in proof of our assertion. We have in many towns instrumental bands, capable of performing the most difficult pieces of music, in a style which the metropolis could not have equalled a few years ago." But since the above was written, ten years ago, others have sprung up, and have taken the places of these, who had surpassed all others. Many aspirants to this distinction in various parts of the country, among whom may be mentioned as performers on the violin, Mawks of Belper, and Farmer of Nottingham, men of considerable promise. And in the vocal department we have names equally celebrated with many of these instrumentalists given above. Among the females the following names will often have been noticed: Mrs. Salmon, Miss Corri, Miss Melville, Miss

Travis, Miss Tree, Miss Stephens, Miss Paton, Miss Wilkinson, Miss Symonds, Mrs. Atkinson, Mrs. Keely, Miss Child, Miss Fletcher, Miss Linley, Mrs. Billington, and many others of varying degrees of fame. Amongst the other sex, the reader will often have either heard, or heard speak of, Mr. Harrison, a native of Belper, in Derbyshire, one of the best tenor singers England has ever produced; Mr. Incledon, the celebrated singer of sea-songs; Mr. Buggine, Mr. Braham, and the two Sapio's, all tenor singers: and Mr. Terrail, and Mr. Knyvett counter-tenors. The leading bass singers, were, some time ago, Bellamy, Taylor, and Phillips.

But besides the gratification thus afforded to a large part of the community, and the direct improvement of the science, other purposes, of a public and private kind,—ulterior and collateral,—pecuniary, complimentary, and benevolent,—are promoted by these associations. Very large sums have been paid to instrumental performers, as well as vocalists, for their services on special occasions. But the *charitable* designs put forth by these institutions, have perhaps contributed most to make these public musical festivals popular. Whilst therefore the hearers at such seasons are transported into an Elysium, where the genius of music charms the soul through the medium of her master-spirits, they are yielding a cheerful per centage on their delights in favour of the sorrowing portion of

humanity. Thus the aged and infirm, the widow and the orphan, have been made partakers of their song of joy. Such is the avowed object of the great musical festivals, a series of which have been held at Birmingham nearly every three years, the first having commenced in 1778; with others in London, Manchester, York, Norwich, Liverpool, Chester, and Derby. The scale of these festivals is of the most magnificent kind. Not only is England expected to furnish the flowers of her performers, but Europe is canvassed for the first specimens of the art. At the York festival, in 1828, the performers, vocal and instrumental, amounted together to the amazing number of 618! But the receipts for the respective charities, considerable as they are, are nevertheless grievously curtailed by the great expense with which they are attended. At the Birmingham festival in 1823, £10,558 14*s.* 0½*d.* was received; leaving net profit to the Hospital £5,806 12*s.* 6½*d.*

It might be well for us here to pause a moment, and view with thoughtful mind the scenes and seasons of which we have been giving a brief description, and in which the reader may at times have mingled with delight. It is important for the Christian to recollect on these occasions, that music should not only harmonize with itself, but also with the cautions, precepts, doctrines, and experience of scripture, if it is to minister to his happiness. But is such the character of the popu-

lar concerts, musical clubs, and festivals to which we have just been making reference? We cannot answer in the affirmative. We fear it is otherwise. The mixed character of the music—sacred and secular, with not unfrequent sprinklings of the frothy and indecorous—the indifference manifested to the religious conduct of the performers—the assembly, race, and other similar amusements, that act, either as introducers, concomitants, or as suppliments to such assemblages—are the base alloy to the pure pleasures of music, which otherwise might be enjoyed.

In consequence of such incongruous amalgamations of character, many concerts have been discountenanced by ministers of the gospel, both as unfitting to be held in buildings set apart for Divine worship, and as enchanted ground, on which it is not safe for the Christian to tread. These views we believe prompted the Dean of St. Paul's, a few years ago, to refuse the use of Westminster Abbey for the purpose of holding in it a musical festival. The opinions of the late Rev. Richard Watson on the subject would have led him to adopt the same conclusion. It may not be irrelevant to notice here his conduct and language on a similar occasion. His excellent biographer observes, "A splendid musical festival and fancy ball were advertised to be held in Manchester; and some members of the Methodist Society, and others who attended the Methodist ministry, de-

ceived by the word *sacred*, were known to have purchased tickets of admission. Mr. Watson preached a sermon with reference to the subject, in which he proved that the whole affair was a laboured attempt to reconcile Christ with Belial, and to ensnare the unwary, by disguising the pleasures of sin under the garb of religion. After describing the spirit and habits of many professional singers and performers, in terms unhappily true, but the reverse of complimentary, he exclaimed with great emphasis, 'And, forsooth, these men are pledged to mimic the sacrificial wailings of my blessed Lord; and to sound on cat-gut the groans which redeemed the world!' The effects of this sermon were most satisfactory. Not more than one or two members of the Methodist Society, in the circuit to which Mr. Watson belonged, attended the festival. They chose rather to forfeit the money which they had inadvertently paid, than sacrifice their religious consistency."*

Such conduct on the part of the reverend gentleman's hearers, was very complimentary to their religious consistency, as well as to the deference paid to the character of the preacher, as a judge of musical science, and as an able director of Christian morals.

But delighted as we are with the cutting satire which concludes the eloquent philippic, in the

* Rev. Thomas Jackson's Life of Watson, p. 457.

sermon just noticed, we may be allowed to say, under less exciting circumstances than those under which the sermon was delivered, that if this keen and striking satire was left to its indiscriminate and vehement operation, according to the license granted above, it would not only sever, and scatter to the winds, *cat-gut*, but every *other* kind of gut, as equally unconnected with mind, and unable therefore *consciously* to sympathize, either with the joys or sufferings of the Redeemer.

Were the abstract principle, which gives the value to the above paragraph, acted upon in our congregational music, all that tenderness of feeling, and burst of zeal; the subdued, yet expressive tone of sorrow, and the buoyant strains of heaven-aspiring joy, would either be classed among the glaring acts of profanity, or they would neutralize themselves into unmeaning insipidity. Such inevitably must be the conclusion; yet we are assured such an extent and compass of bearing was not intended by their author. Certainly it is the occasion, the subject of the strains, the intellect, and moral principle which directs the instruments, and breathes through the music, that gives the *proper character* of their use.

But leaving this particular case for others, presenting fewer grounds for censure, where efforts are laudably united for the advantage of man, in the extension of musical science, as is the case in other branches of knowledge, there is often too

great a fastidiousness shown, and an over anxious disposition to find opportunity for condemnation. It is hardly necessary to say, that when singers take up a piece of sacred music, especially in public, they ought to accompany it with becoming feelings and demeanor, and that their moral character should be in harmony with the subject. But with this rule full in view, it may be well to remember, that, in our congregations what numbers of persons there are, that make not the least profession of religion, but are indeed notoriously wicked in their lives, but having good voices, join heartily in the singing, in which they use language directly at variance with their real state. Yet no interdict is laid upon their voice, but they are rather encouraged in the practice; and the congregational act *en mass*, is presented to God, as an acceptable sacrifice of praise. Besides, when we in the stringency of justice, are denouncing all that take an active part in Divine worship, that come not up to the Christian character, do we bear in mind the characters of those composers whose music is recommended to be sung, and against whom not a breath of murmur is seldom heard? It is well known that Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and nearly all our distinguished writers of sacred music, composed secular music, and not only of the sober, and comparatively innocent kind, but they contributed to the operas and theatres, in conformity to the fashion and spirit of the times.

So that the same musical inspiration that breathed its strains through a theatre, to the delight of a dissipated audience, awoke the harp of Judah to sing of mercy and of judgment in the triumphs of the Redeemer, and the joys of the blessed in heaven.

These observations are made with reluctance, and are not designed to give a license to irreligious performers of sacred music; but as a call to candour and consistency of decision, and as a plea, which we humbly think in many cases, ought to be entertained in *arrest of judgment* in favour of such as are thus arraigned before the bar of the Christian public.

Moreover, before quitting our present position, and closing this chapter, we are tempted to say a few more words, "in plainness of speech," yet with that "charity that covereth a multitude of sins," on the anomalous language used by some people in reference to the point under consideration. Now persons who sustain the character to whom our observations refer, see no beauty in music, out of the limits of a psalm, or hymn tune; that is plain congregational singing; and they look upon all who travel beyond those boundaries, as lawless and dangerous adventurers. Such may be their honest sentiments; and however their advocacy of them may show their ignorance, it will not impeach their sincerity.

But such persons fall into a strange dilemma, when

that close their observations fraught with the above opinions, with a glowing eulogy on the noble and sublime science of music, and recommend its cultivation by taste and genius, not forgetting to make prominent the names of Handel, and others of the old great masters, as models for imitation. We have always considered such language as strangely insipid and inconsistent. We know right well and cheerfully declare it—the great richness, force, and beauty, which is often compressed within the narrow limits of a common tune—efforts that find a happy parallel in the poetry of some of our psalms and hymns. But can it be imagined that every desirable complexion of musical genius can unfold itself within such scanty dimensions? The answer is obvious. In the department of poetry we observe the same track of procedure. It is to be presumed that the discursive, sublime, and adventurous genius of Milton, in its fellowship and conflict with etherial powers, would not have borne away a fame equal to that which followed "Paradise Lost," from the more homely efforts of religious versification. It is justly observed, that, "the greatest poets have not proved the best hymn makers. Milton made but one tolerable psalm; and still more modern poets of note have not redeemed the credit of their class." How very small is the number of really good tunes, left by composers who occupy the most prominent place in the "rolls of fame." Had their

reputation rested entirely upon their contributions to psalmody, it would have been but dimly seen in the vision of posterity. It was their brilliancy and luxuriancy of imagination, their power and intensity of thought, that impelled them to break over the ramparts of verse, in order to give scope to their creative powers. Who ever thinks of the merits of Handel, but at the same time thinks of the *Messiah;* or of Haydn, but remembers the *creation?* They are as intimate as cause and effect.

When we therefore give exclusive preference to psalmody, and yet bring forward as models, our great masters, we are at variance with ourselves, and render our advice worthless. But these opposite views often succumb to each other according to the press of circumstances; for few will so far stultify themselves, as to profess to throw back the progress of knowledge, by blotting out of existence the sublime productions of our eminent masters. Nor can they deny that the path in which they have "won immortal fame," is open to others, and the benefit of each and all of their exertions to be enjoyed by the public, so far as circumstances will allow.

The question now meets us, *how* and *where* is such music to be brought out? For it must have "a local habitation," as well as "a name." If it asks for admission into congregational worship, directly the doors are bolted; if it obtains a

hearing under the auspices of a concert, or music meeting, it will be denounced as an irreverent prostitution of holy things; if it retires into the parlour — the domestic circle, its timid, sweet, captivating charms, will awaken suspicions, that it will supplant the more sober duties of devotion.

So that, according to the fears, prejudices, and whims, of this class of friends, the onward cultivation of the science, must be banished to the hermit's cell, followed by its devoted admirers; otherwise it must maintain an ideal existence in the undeveloped regions of musical genius. But we have pursued these objections far enough, and shall return at the guardian call of Christian principles; to whose admonitions we shall listen in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

The moral character of singers important—early attendance necessary—tunes should be selected before service begins—occasional improprieties of preachers in starting tunes, &c.—necessity of putting right tunes to hymns—new tunes should be introduced with caution—on the use of notes in public worship—on the management of the breath, modulation, emphasis, &c.

We shall devote this chapter to miscellaneous observations, chiefly in regard to the conduct of singers, and the effective discharge of their duties as such. It is not unlikely that some of the subsequent remarks may have been previously introduced, either in the assertion or illustration of some controverted point. That, however, will not be a reason sufficient for wishing their absence from this chapter, where they will appear to most advantage.

In the formation of a choir, due regard should be had to the character of the singers in a religious point of view. This should not—it cannot be lost sight of with consistency. The doors of entrance are made wider in some places of worship than in others. In some, none but members of the church are admitted; while in others, those of orderly and moral habits, though not decidedly religious, are

admissible. The latter custom is doubtless the more common, and when properly guarded, is what that charity which "hopeth all things," will be disposed to allow. But this rule is grievously outraged in many places. It must be admitted that the character of every one that bears office in the house of God, down to the "hewers of wood and drawers of water," is mixed up with the operations of the gospel, and indirectly at least, pledged for its success. Does it not then appear monstrous, that the man who is fiddling at the wakes all around the country, leading on with every species of low cunning the fascinating dance, obtaining a living at the expense of thousands of the youth of both sexes; or he, who is in the habit of attending a public house, or elsewhere, and entertaining a bacchanalian company with songs that cannot be heard without a blush covering the face of any one having the least claim to modesty;—is it not, we ask, strangely out of character for such an one to be found formally engaged in a Christian congregation, conducting its praises to a pure and all-seeing God? These observations are not recklessly made, as though the author were insensible to the value of such musical capabilities, or of the difficulty, especially in some places, of raising an effective choir. On the contrary, he is always grieved to see persons so well qualified, by their improper conduct, exclude themselves from a situation, which, under other circumstances they

might fill to such advantage. And when individuals steadfastly resist temptation, to prostitute their musical skill to propagate infidel sentiments and licentious practices; but who, on the contrary, are consecrating their powers in aid of moral truth and religious devotion, they are worthy of no slight commendation.

Strange as it may appear, from whatever cause, and however the avowal of the fact may give umbrage — such is the fact, that singers as a body are very difficult to please. They seem generally disposed to ask the full market price for their services; and few commodities take the advantage of scarcity, sooner than musical talent. In aid of the bad effects at times produced by the stupidity and whims of singers, we hesitate not to say, that preachers and other official individuals, from a want of taste and judgment rightly to appreciate their services, or from a fastidious meddling with things non-essential, have often lent their influence in a way that could afterwards afford but little satisfaction to considerate and Christian minds. Still with every just consideration in favour of singers, a scriptural government must be maintained in the church; and wherever that authority is vested, it cannot be supposed to have a residence in the singers' gallery.

It is very desirable for the singers to be in their places a little before the time appointed to begin the service. When, after a smart walk, they take

their seats, after the singing is commenced, besides the annoyance to which they subject themselves, an unpleasant sensation is produced in the minds of others, who witness their gasping for breath in order to support the tune. The singers in this respect, would do well to keep in mind one of the principal rules of their art—*to keep good time.*

An *early* attendance will enable the singers to *select with deliberation the tunes* which are to be sung in the service; and thereby obviate the necessity of searching at the moment, and amidst confusion for a tune, which when found is often unsuited to the hymn. Indeed the habit of turning over the leaves of music books, and handing them from one to another, is too much practised beyond the urgency of the occasion. It is grievous to witness the singers perusing and tracing over the notes with perfect indifference, while the preacher is exerting himself in unfolding the all-important system of Redeeming mercy; or while engaged in the still equally important duty of leading the prayers of the congregation to the mercy seat of heaven. Lord Chesterfield himself would denounce such conduct; and such a practice is certainly an outrage on the common courtesies of society, and a burlesque of the worship of God. This charge may receive some palliation, from its often being the result of sheer inconsideration, and newly kindled ardour of musical enthusiasm.

It is desirable, in a general way, for the singers

to have the hymns before the service is begun. Some preachers of extemporaneous habits are as desultory in the choice of their hymns, as in the arrangement of their discourses. There have been instances of ministers of this stamp, when asked for the hymns, to look with surprise upon the enquirer, as though he were going improperly to anticipate the service. This arrangement is particularly requisite for those preachers who admit of no delay in pitching the tunes. It is no very uncommon occurrence for a preacher of this description, especially in smaller congregations, after mentioning the page, perhaps in so low a tone as not to be heard by one half of the singers, and making no mention of the metre, after reading over two lines of the hymn, if the singers are not ready in the instant, to strike off a tune himself; but often in so low, or so high a key, as to make the impropriety of the act clearly conspicuous to the whole congregation. On some such like occasions, the singers have at times remained silent, and allowed the preacher to carry on the tune to his own taste. Such scenes are extremely painful, as they call up a collision of feelings which ought to have no existence under the sound of the gospel of peace. The singers cannot be justified in taking such a part; nor can the preacher be held excusable. It cannot be expected that singers can so far unmake themselves, and stultify their musical attainments, as to be obliged to run a race in some flippant air,

or to growl out some discordant ditty, merely because the preacher, in sheer ignorance, chooses to give the start, and word of command.

From hence we take a straight course in observing, that as the hymn should support the sermon, or prayer, so the tune should aid the hymn, that sense and sound may act in concert. If the theme be animated, let the air march cheerfully and brisk; if solemn, let not the music make unseemly haste. Suppose we were to enter a devout congregation while they were singing:

"The men of grace have found,
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruit on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow.

"Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching through Emanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high,"

we should naturally expect the tune to be lively; nor would it be difficult to imagine it accompanied with buoyant feelings, sparkling eyes, and vigorous tone. But widely different would be the music, and manner, in singing the following pathetic lines:—

Behold him, all ye that pass by,
The bleeding Prince of life and peace!
Come, see, ye worms, your Maker die,
And say, was ever grief like his!
Come, feel with me his blood applied;
My Lord, my love, is crucified.

Then let us sit beneath his cross,
And gladly catch the healing stream;
All things for him account but loss,
And give up all our hearts to him;
Of nothing think or speak beside;
My Lord, my love, is crucified.

Such discrepancies do occur, however, at times, in the most orderly congregations. But how desirable it is for singers, especially the leaders, in addition to musical skill, to be persons of some literary taste, and much sound and enlightened piety.

There is a general propensity in singers to be continually introducing new tunes; a practice disapproved of by the majority, in all congregations. It is to be expected that singers will give a willing admission to a new and pleasing air, and that they will waft it forward to kindred amateurs. But such is not the feeling of the congregation. Their object in public worship, is not so much to *learn* to sing, as to *sing* what they *have* learnt. They mostly wish to be free from the embarrassment of new and technical performances. An eye to this would greatly promote congregational singing. Some places are distinguished for their melodious and zealous co-operation. As soon as the tune is started, all that can sing, seem to believe it their duty to use their voices and swell the song of praise; while in others a different habit prevails; they praise by proxy; the choir being the only performers, even when the music is what may

be properly termed congregational. Mr. Wesley expresses himself strongly in favour of congregational singing, when he says, "No music is to be heard upon earth comparable to the sound of many thousand voices, when they are all harmoniously joined together, singing praises to God and the Lamb." New tunes should be introduced with judgment. The singers should subordinate their love for the art, in its varying degrees of excess, to the interest of the congregation.

Before a new tune is introduced into public, it should be made tolerably familiar to the singers. Every public performance should be done as much as possible with confidence and ease; conveying the impression that the performers are fully competent to their task. When symptoms of a contrary kind appear, painfnl anxiety is soon elicited. The law of sympathy in this respect is very strong. When a preacher appears before a large congregation, manifestly unfit for the task, either for want of talent, or through timidity, the candid hearer is fain to cast himself on the forbearance of love. Equally depressed do the same individuals feel when the singers happen not to have a right tune at hand; or when it is pitched too high, or too low; or if the voices wander from the key, when instruments are employed; or when some part of them stumble into another tune, or repeat, while others of them are pursuing the air. Such occurrences often take place in small chapels, and sometimes in large

ones, when the people drop their heads as though they could like to put their eyes in their pockets, and blush, as if their countenances were lighted up from the burning faces of the singers.

Singers are too fond of *practising* immediately before, and after the public service. This may be allowable when the tunes can be performed tolerably expert, as it tends to initiate them into public notice. But this should not be done with repeated blunders; as it would, besides misplacing the occasion for training, too much individualize the imperfections of the singers, and make impressions unfavourable to their musical character. It is therefore quite right, and indeed indispensable for *music meetings* to be instituted, where the freedom of exercise will not be discouraged, by their mistakes being exposed to the public eye.

The success of an enterprise often depends upon the manner in which it is begun. This suggestion is not irrelevant to the employment under notice. Let the tune be commenced in a *fair*, *full*, *firm*, and nearly *simultaneous* voice, in opposition to a weak, timid tone, which leaves the matter for some time doubtful, whether the strain will die or live; or one and another halting so long after the leader, as if they were ashamed of his company, or were waiting to see what reception he met with, before they ventured their assistance.

It is hardly necessary to say, that singers will find the presence of *music books* useful, over which

they may cast their eye at pleasure. This will give them confidence. A temperate use of this assistance, which necessity requires, custom commonly allows. It is, notwithstanding, to the credit of singers not to make a servile use of their books in public. The more extemporaneous the music appears to be given, the better effect it will have. On ordinary occasions, all the machinery of the art, and signals of government, should be shrouded as much as possible from public view. The author knows this to be an unwelcome piece of advice to many. There are some aspirants to musical honours, that make a disgusting parade of books and their appendages in public. The sweeping *three-to-four*, or *two-to-four* swing of the arm; the stamp of the foot; the mechanical motion of the head, as though it were hung in wires, and the agitation of the whole body, render them too ludicrous objects on an occasion where God is professed to be "worshipped with reverence and fear." It is but just, however, to observe, that there are some persons of solid and splendid musical attainments, who so lose themselves in their art, and are so carried away by the enthusiasm of execution, as to be quite unconscious how much they thereby disturb the risible muscles of the auditory.

The management of the *breath* is a matter deserving the special attention of the singer; both as regards his own comfort, and from the

effects which his performance will have upon the hearers. "Power, or softness, volubility, or sweetness, depend greatly on the prudent management of the breath. By a proper inflation of the lungs at the beginning of a note, the singer is enabled to give that gradual swell and diminution of voice, which forms one of the most exquisite beauties of the science." By an economical distribution of the breath, singers will be able to continue to an extent, to which they would not otherwise be able. Breath should be taken at the commencement of a long run, or division of cadence, or pause, that the effect of the music may not be destroyed by stopping in the middle for that purpose. It is not proper to stop in the middle of a word, whether it be of one or more syllables. Those who are too lavish of their breath at the commencement of a note, lose all self-command before the termination; and the voice, instead of continuing firm, sinks into the querulous tone of extreme old age.

The proper *modulation* of the voice, is an achievement that claims the attention of every singer, who would wish to render prominent the sense of the words to which the music is appended. The abbreviated signs of *pia*, and *for*, are generally put to music as a guide to the singer. But they, with other symbolic characters in music, are often unsatisfactory guides; and, though they may rightly regulate the music, fail to bring out the meaning of

the words. Were the music always set to the same words, then there would be something like precision in the rule. But as tunes are in a great measure promiscuously chosen, the import of the words should direct the singer in the compass and quality of the sound.

In the selection of music lately published under the editorship of Mr. Novello; most of the signs, that are usually given to regulate *time*, *style*, &c. are omitted, for reasons given above. This however is leaving the music too unguarded; and supposes greater attainments than is possessed by the generality of singers.

The precise *articulation* of the words, is an excellence that cannot be neglected without injury to good music. Some singers are in the habit of giving a strange and fanciful, yet, to all persons who have any skill in language, disgusting pronunciation to many words; so much so, that at times it would be difficult to ascertain to what language they belong. Mr. Nathan observes, "the formation of the mouth should not be altered while singing a vowel, otherwise the correct pronunciation of such words as yes, no, smile, me, she, sigh, and many others, is destroyed, or changed into unmeaning expressions: as *yeas*, *noa*, *smoil*, *moy*, *mea*, *shea*, *floy*, *sigha*, and so on. Is it natural to hear such a perversion of orthography from the lips of well educated persons, who would no doubt be

very tenacious in speaking, but yet will make no scruple in thus departing from propriety in singing, when in fact one of the chief beauties in the science is elegant pronunciation."

Emphasis and *accent*, are as necessary to be observed in music, as in reading. If the music be good, the style of its movement will correspond with that of the verse. "Without accent there is no more melody in song than in the humming of a bee; and without the regular arrangement of long and short syllables, there can be no versification. There are as many accents, or modes of enforcing or enfeebling of words, in music as in speech. There is a *yes* that says *no*, and a *no* that says *yes*. There are accents of spirit, and accents of violence —of tenderness, and of friendship. The voice of a feeling singer can modulate all these shades, and affect the hearer on the side of intellect as well as sense."*

As in all languages there are in words of different syllables, certain letters accented, so in music is each bar, or measure, divided into accented and unaccented parts. In common time, of four crotchets in a bar, the first and third are accented, and the second and fourth unaccented. In triple time, of three crotchets, or six quavers in a bar, the first only is accented. The following couplets may

* See Rees's Cyclopedia.

serve to keep the rule fresh in the mind of the reader:

> "In common time remember well by art,
> The first and third is the accented part;
> And if your music triple time should be,
> Your accent is the first of every three."

END OF PART III.

PART IV.

MUSIC OF THE CHURCH.

PART IV.

CHAPTER I.

PSALMODY AND PSALMISTS.

General observations on psalmody, its importance—many poor psalms and hymns in use—the greatest poets not always the best hymn writers—the hymnic capabilities of Cowley, Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Burns and Bloomfield referred to—notices of the psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins, Brady and Tate, Addison, Doddridge, Bishop Kenn, Hart, Beddome, Toplady, Olivers, and Rhodes.

In a work professing to treat on the music of the church, it will not be thought irrelevant to add a chapter, to consider the character of the hymns to which it is united. If the opinion be correct, that national ballads have a powerful influence in perpetuating the manners and customs, and in preserving the lineaments and freshness of the original character of the country, which has given them birth, and which is their theme; Christian psalmody must be considered equally effective, not only by preserving the expositions of Divine truth

clear, entire, and steady, but also by bringing them constantly before all classes of the community.

And when we call to mind the quantity of hymns now in use, original and select, sectionized for every department of Divine worship, and every stage of religious education, in volumes of every variety of size,—it must be admitted that we of the present day, have very much the advantage of those who lived in the more early ages of the Christian church. So large a number of hymns, which, in some form or other, and by as many various means, find their way into Christian and ungodly dwellings, cannot but erect innumerable and formidable checks to the progress of vice, and minister essentially to the life of individual and family devotion. For, there is scarcely a scriptural doctrine and duty; a promise of the Holy Spirit; a tone of religious feeling, from the enraptured soarings of the apostle Paul in the third heavens, to the inexpressible anguish of the poverty-stricken Job on the dunghill, which a hymn may not be found to illustrate and apply.

And, their use is equally observable within the important sphere of ministerial labour. Materials so excellent, as a proper selection of hymns, put into the hands of a preacher, if he be a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed," will give him powerful aid in "doing the work of an evangelist." How often, when an appropriate hymn has followed the sermon, has the attention of the congregation

been recalled to its several parts, in a pointed, unexpected, and yet in an agreeable manner; and the gracious feeling just created, received further nourishment.

But of the hymns now in use, as well as of those of former times, there are great numbers that have no legitimate claims to the honour to which we have alluded. In conveying this censure, it is not on account of their being defective compositions, in the *classification*, and as that *peculiar* kind of poetry that would allow them critically to be denominated hymns, for on that point we are not just now speaking, but in the broad and popular sense, as *poetic* effusions. There may be all the limbs and parts of rhyme, quantity, and accent, to give the verse a poetic form, and the symmetry may be highly wrought out, and amply charged with the application of scripture truth, and yet there may be nothing of the breath and soul of poetry. But there are hymns which have not this excellence, humble as it is: they have not the merit even of being clever counterfeits. In the absence of poetic genius, the plain sense of the subject, is often inverted, cramped, or inflated, at— perhaps the mere suggestion of a rhyme, or for the purpose of introducing a singular and ridiculous figure. Thus the order of composition is inverted; the sense is compressed or extended, given in part, or as a whole, in order to fit the verse; and the instruction thereby professed to be given is worse

than neutralized, by the verse vainly aping the tone, form, and movement of poetic genius.

It is a marvel with many persons that hymns quite unworthy of existence should share so much of popular favour, even after their defects have become apparent. But the force and permanency of early impressions, are as observable in poetry and music, as in other departments of knowledge. And this dominating influence exerts itself in those persons who are eminently qualified to distinguish and appreciate the niceties and richness of poetic composition. But it seems we are unwilling to discharge old servants, and to lay aside instruments that have ministered, notwithstanding their imperfections, to our happiness in former days. And moreover this practice is cherished by a regard for the interests of a community. The multitude are not critics; and numbers have no inward relish for, and a still greater number have no educational qualification to judge of the beauties of poetry; and if the sense is clearly, and familiarly made out, they are satisfied. And those persons whose taste and judgment in regard to themselves would often suggest a different choice, lead, or follow in the use of those hymns, on account of their being agreeable to the popular taste. It should also be remembered, that in many doggerel and meagre hymns, there are verses, or lines, so much superior to their associates, or so appropriate to particular circumstances and occasions, as to obtain a ready

recommendation to the whole hymn. It is this reason that has mainly contributed to perpetuate the existence of many hymnic effusions, which otherwise would not have emerged beyond the bounds of their native circle.

It is not our purpose here to attempt an exposure of their defects, and point out the "nakedness of the land." The domain of hymnology, in common with other departments of literature, as it ought to be, is open to competition; and there lack not adventurers from time to time, who are big with enthusiastic hope, that they will be able to cultivate the soil, and produce marketable commodities. And so they do; for trashy indeed is that produce that will not command attention, when multitudes can relish and digest the most unwholesome mental food. Mr. Montgomery observes, "the faults of ordinary hymns, are, vulgar phrases, low words, hard words, technical terms, inverted construction, broken syntax, barbarous abbreviations, that make our beautiful English horrid even to the eye, bad rhymes, or no rhymes where rhymes are expected, but above all number without cadence."

The assertion is trite enough, that our greatest poets, have but rarely applied their genius to this section of their art. A slight investigation into its truth, will not only add confirmation to the statement, but open fresh springs of regret in the Christian heart, that such should have been, and should

still be the case. Surely that worship which brings the soul near to the "Father of spirits,"—that is an efficient means to an end, and that end, the glory of God and the salvation of the soul,—is deserving of the most sweet, holy, sublime, and impressive strains which the poet, yes, a master poet, is able to bring from the treasures of his mind.

For the performance of such a work, it is undeniable, there requires to be superadded to the elements of poetry, a scriptural, a religious fitness, —an inspiration that is moulded, saturated, and guided by the living principle of the gospel; which we are compelled to admit has not hitherto been the main excellence in the character of many of our popular poets. A person may give glowing descriptions of the attributes of the Deity; descant with amazing force and fluency on the obligations which creatures are laid under to serve such a Creator; he may be able to pourtray with graphic effect, the various scenes and conditions of life, and touch the very spring of human sympathies, without being skilled in tracing out the workings of the Divine Spirit, and of leading man as a sinner to the God of all grace for saving mercy. Attempts of this kind have been made, but not without being subjected to the charge, of offering "strange fire on the altar."

But even with the aid of such qualifications, all poets are not competent to write good hymns.

Some of our best religious poets, have written but few worthy of themselves. And the reason is very assignable. The compass of design; the flight of imagination; the exuberance of description, and the amplification of illustration;—the free expansion of the mind; the unrestrained outgoings of the poetic soul in thought and expression, requisite, or allowable properties, in the constitution of an epic poem, are very different from those employed in the composition of a hymn. In the latter is required a severe, yet at the same time, an agreeable and natural compression of thought and language. There is no place for allegory, or even the free use of figure. Nor will the composition derive any advantage from colloquial, quaint, and clap-trap expressions. Scripture language and figures, and references to scripture events and transactions, are proper mediums, through which to convey devotional influence; partly because scripture modes of illustration are generally true to nature, and partly because they come to us in the character of familiar friends, besides having the sanction of Divine authority.

The severe rules which are thus imposed on the composition of superior stanzas for popular devotion, make the effort more difficult than general readers may at first imagine; and nothing but a leading poetic genius, rightly adapted, can give a polish, a charm, and an air of originality, to common-place and long since exhausted topics. It

would be attended with but little satisfaction, to enter into the question, as to what is the proper *definition of a hymn;* for a rule laid down on that matter by one person, would be objected to by another; from the difference of taste, stages of religious experience, and temperament in devotional feeling, as well as by the bias of custom. Such an inquiry would arrive at no just conclusion, did it lose sight of the *derivation*, and *original* import of such a class of composition, and its scriptural adaptation to the ends designed; both of which, but especially the latter, would allow a generous latitude. Every part of Divine truth is doubtless a legitimate theme for a hymn. But the crowning excellence of the effort, is to give such a description of the attributes of the Deity, in all their amplitude and variety of revelation, as shall meet, without the formality of introduction, or compromise, or reserve, — the impurity, misery, helplessness, — the fears, hopes, love, joy, and confidence of the soul in every state of human experience;—that every representation of the affluence of Divine beneficence, to all that the heart wants, or enjoys, should at once be *seen* and *felt*, by the *plain*, *illiterate* Christian worshipper. The test which Dr. Johnson employs to find the true value of poetry, is still more appropriate to its hymnic section: he says, "By the common sense of readers, uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of subtlety and the dogma-

tism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours."

A writer of considerable compass of mind, and acuteness of investigation, in his animadversions on Mr. Montgomery's Introduction to his Christian Psalmist, in the Wesleyan Magazine for 1831, labours hard to fix the precise qualities of which a hymn should consist. Many of his observations are ingenious and pertinent, and receive great force from the verses which he quotes for their illustration. But his reasoning is too circuitous to carry full conviction, and too metaphysical to render his conclusions available for popular devotion. The clever animadverter too much resembles that person, who, by a tedious and dangerous course ascends a rock, in order to point out what flowers would best adorn the banks of the rivulet that runs below.

It is worse than idle to decide dogmatically upon the hymnic capabilities of the higher class of poets of preceding years. The germination of genius depended much, very much, on the currents of life by which they were planted, and the quality of religious influence to which they were exposed. No doubt most of them, had they been bent upon the task, could have produced hymns superior to the occasional efforts with which they gratified posterity. Cowley, Dryden, Pope, and others, not usually entitled to such distinction, have given proof of this; while Cowper, who had every thing

in his character and circumstances to feed the most sanguine hopes of success in this department of his art, has hereby added nothing to his poetic fame; or indeed made achievements worthy of himself. In opposition to the wide current of matter-of-course eulogy given to the estimable poet of Weston, we cannot but think his hymns greatly inferior to his other religious poetry; but more of him hereafter. The poetic temperament of Gray, Goldsmith, Burns, Bloomfield, and others, certainly seems admirably adapted for such a work. It is true we have some slight misgivings in regard to the first name. For the specimens which he has left, show more of care in cultivation, than luxuriance of the soil. Dr. Johnson's remark, will acquire force by examination: that, "in all Gray's odes there is a cumbrous splendour which we wish away." There is a degree of uneasiness produced, by his continued attempt to crowd his verse with imagery, and to elevate his theme by the glitter of ornaments. But around the verse of the author of the "Deserted Village," no such thoughts intrude. In him especially, there is a tenderness, a minuteness of perception and description; a perspicuity of style; an ease, chasteness, and familiarity of diction, through which he pours out the fulness of his soul, that decidedly indicate his capabilities for hymnic composition.

The Roman Catholic church, from its commencement, as has been previously shown, used

human compositions bearing the name of hymns, or songs, in their devotions. But these were often sung in an unknown tongue, and their excellencies and defects were equally a mystery to the common people. Few of these have survived the sentence of oblivion, to which the whole class have been doomed by the improving knowledge of the people.

The most remarkable effort of this kind, and the earliest in latter times which have remained to this day, is the translation of the Psalms of David, by Sternhold and Hopkins, sometime about 1530. These translations were designed and sanctioned by royal authority, to be used in the established church of England; and which continue to be used with great respect, by many persons even to the present time. To speak of them in general terms, of course admitting exceptions, they are a rude, unsocial, and curious collection. As mere translations they are considered tolerably faithful; which has tended to perpetuate their existence, by obtaining for them the protection of the unpoetical part of biblical scholars.

With every apology for them which candour can invent, as a collection of Christian psalmody, they seem however utterly unsuitable to further the ends of Divine worship. Many of them have not the merit of doing no harm; for they are positively injurious, by tempting the mind to vain and humourous thoughts, when engaged in Divine worship; and thereby poisoning the rich flow of holy

feeling which saturates, and runs through the Psalms of David. No marvel that these compositions should often have been made the means of burlesquing this important part of Divine service.

In about a century and a half after the publication of the "done-in-rhyme" translations of Sternhold and Hopkins, appeared the version of Dr. Brady and Nahum Tate. It is true it is less rugged, antiquated, and patched-up than that of its predecessor; yet from its expletive, circumlocutionary, and insipid character, it can put forth small claims to superiority. Strange as it may appear to many persons, these two versions agree to monopolize in many churches, in the nineteenth century, the choral service of the church of England.

The four hymns which Addison gave the world, beginning respectively, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord," &c., "The spacious firmament on high," &c., "When all thy mercies, O my God," &c., and "The Lord my pasture shall prepare," &c., were a valuable legacy, and every way worthy of the author of the "*Spectator*," and of the "*Letter from Italy*." Though the truth of the assertion be admitted, but cautiously admitted,—that the merit of Addison's poetry is less conspicuous than that of his prose; yet that impression against his hymns will fade, by comparing them with the multitude of that class of poetry. Nor will the insinuation, that they inexplicitly recognize

the peculiar principles of the gospel; and that they breathe a languid tone of Christian feeling, be entertained by those who duly consider either the tenor of their theme, the mode of working out their train of thought, or the circumstances under which they were written.

Three out of the four are of a discoursive character, and open out enlarged views of the works and providence of God. But in the course of this survey, there is nothing abrupt and astounding. The feelings of the readers are not disturbed by any unexpected bursts of passion, or daring flights of imagination. On the contrary the progress is calm and contemplative; the style elegant and free, both in thought and language; and the effect on the reader is to inspire him with grateful sentiments for, and cheerful confidence in, the dispensations of Divine providence. These hymns form a glowing contrast to the compositions just noticed; and the reader turns away from them with regret that their number is not greater.

It should be observed, that before the period of which we are now speaking, many hymns were composed in the Lutheran and Moravian churches, by authors now unknown, which have found their way into this country in the garb of translations. These hymns have found a welcome reception into the collections which have from time to time been published by the different denominations of Christians. The French and Spanish have also

made some addition in the English language, under similar circumstances.

The hymns of Doddridge will not endure a comparison with those of Addison, in the power, expansion, and charm of poetic genius, in sustaining the unity, and interest of his theme; in the masterly cast of thought, and richness and finish of expression. Addison was a poet both by nature and profession, and he sought accomplishment in the art. His poetic genius shone through the medium of his Christianity. Doddridge gloried in being a Christian Divine; and he poured the waters of life through the channels of verse. Without being indifferent to the beauty of language, he was less mindful of the casket, than of the treasure which it contained. If, therefore, the verses of Doddridge fall below those of Addison by the test of poetic merit, they amply excel in the diffusion of those momentous truths which are the life and glory of the gospel. Indeed his hymns with considerable variations, partake of the same judicious, cheerful, and instructive character that pervades his *Family Expositor*, and his other theological works, to which they will be linked in enduring fame. They were chiefly posthumous; and were published under the unpoetic editorship of Job Orton. Their number amounts to nearly four hundred; a great part of which it is not to be expected, will be much used in public. Among the favourites may be named, "Arise, my tenderest thoughts, arise,"

&c., "O! happy day that fix'd my choice," &c., "Lord of the worlds above," &c., "Eternal source of every joy," &c., "God of my life through all its days," &c., and another, which we shall shortly have a better opportunity of introducing.

Bishop Kenn has left the world three valuable hymns. Mr. Montgomery says concerning them, that, "Had their author endowed three hospitals, he might have been less a benefactor to posterity.' This is high praise, but not too high for their worth. The subjects of these lyrical effusions, are *Morning*, *Midnight*, and *Evening;* in which the guardianship of God is propitiated in a style of great simplicity, strength, and feeling. In some parts the urgent prayer of Christian humility wraps itself in very bold, sublime, and poetic conceptions, as in the following verse:

> "Give me a place at thy saints' feet,
> Or some fall'n angel's vacant seat;
> I'll strive to sing as loud as they,
> Who sit above in brighter day."

But the most admirable part of his compositions is the doxology, at the conclusion of each of the hymns. This short verse seems to collect in one harmonious tide of soul, the united, retrospective, and prospective ascriptions of praise from angels and men, to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, springing from the acknowledged glories of his nature, and his immeasurable goodness to the creatures of his care. Certainly no verse in the

The Roverend Augustus Montague Toplady, a minister of the church of England, wrote a few superior hymns. In the Christian controversy which so *unchristianly* raged in the course of the last century, between the Wesleys and Hills, and their abettors, he took a prominent part, and proved himself to be no tame and compromising antagonist, either in attack or defence. His strength of character is as apparent in his poetry, as in his prose; but under the direction of Christian poesy his pen writes a more certain and glorious victory over the general enemies of man, than that for which he struggled in the warfare to which we have just referred. In every stanza, and almost in every line, we see his purpose, feel his vigour, and partake of his varied resources. While walking with him in measured numbers, we have no wish to lead; but are quite satisfied if we are able to keep up with our conductor. It is refreshing to behold one feature in the character of his hymns, so fully identified with that in the compositions of Charles Wesley; or to change the figure, to feel his heart beat in harmonious prayer with that distinguished individual, for the "plenitude of gospel grace," and the "joy of perfect love." One hymn, at least, may be quoted for illustration, beginning, "O! when wilt thou my Saviour be?" &c., which seems to bring us under the immediate inspiration of Charles Wesley's muse, in one of his happiest seasons of holy importunity. Indeed, in the struc-

ture, boldness, and strength of their verse, they more nearly resemble each other, than any other two with which I am acquainted. No wonder therefore that their hymns sometimes should have been mistaken for each other. Thus, in this case we are happy to observe, that the genius of poetry has the advantage over the emissary of theological controversy, in more faithfully making known the genuine feeling of the heart. "Rock of ages, cleft for me," is a charming hymn; and the one entitled "The dying believer to his soul;" beginning, "Deathless principle within," is one of the most daring, and best sustained efforts in Christian poesy. It is rich in the triumphs of hope; which strengthens, and brightens, with change of scene, position, and attack. The clouds of fear arise in view, but to be instantly dissipated, by the increasing effulgence of heavenly light. And after accompanying the believer to the flood of death, we soon hear the shout of victory, as the death-tossed mariner lands on the "banks of deliverance."

Thomas Olivers, a Methodist preacher, wrote a few hymns of undoubted merit. "The God of Abraham praise," &c., and, "Lo! he comes with clouds descending," &c., are the most conspicuous. The Church of England Quarterly Review, for October, 1840, in an article on *psalmody*, quotes the last mentioned hymn, along with Charles Wesley's beginning, "Stand the omnipotent decree," &c., in order to show its superiority over its

associate; and says, that, "Charles Wesley has produced nothing of equal breath and sublimity." Without objecting to all the observations of the Reviewer, in the comparison of these two hymns, it seems rather unfortunate for his conclusion, that, according to his own account, Oliver's hymn should have been so generally understood to be the production of Wesley.

I have been requested to say, that the two hymns in the Wesleyan Supplement, beginning, "My heart and voice I raise," &c., were written by Benjamin Rhodes, also a minister in the Wesleyan Connexion; nor is it unworthy the society to which it has lately been promoted.

CHAPTER II.

Notices of Cowper, Newton, Merrick, Horn, Logan, Steel, Barbauld, Heber, Watts, and Wesley.

THE name of Cowper commands a cheerful respect from every one at all conversant with his writings. His poetry has done more to dignify the art, and to extend its capabilities, to further the noblest objects, to aid the tender charities of life, and to render attractive religious principles and practice, than any poetry in ancient or modern times. The reader who is first made acquainted with his larger poems, will no doubt turn to his hymns with excited expectations. That such expectations will be met is matter of doubt. The reader, after wandering with this delightful companion through his *Task*, and surveying the changing seasons and scenes in nature, and human society, through the magic of his verse, and marking his minute delineation of the human character—its capabilities, and varied associations; and feeling the throb of his sympathizing heart, at misery which he could not alleviate; the Christian, we say, who has luxuriated in such rich, varied, and extended gratifications, will most likely be disappointed in

the enjoyment afforded by his hymns. Losing sight of the merit of his poems in their general character, the sketches which he often throws off as episodes, ebullitions of deep feeling, and the coruscations of genius, that combine to people many passages with life and beauty,—are more exquisite and captivating, than many of his stated devotional pieces. Certainly his hymns are too tame. In comparison with his larger efforts, they appear wanting in vigour, originality, and distinctive character; and the inimitable fashioning of a master hand.

Why it is so, is a question of somewhat difficult solution. For almost every view of the constitution of Cowper's poetical genius, and Christian temperament, would favour a different conclusion. Hence, admitting the theory, that there is a complexion of mind suited to every necessary mental effort, a question arises, whether he was so well fitted to write hymns, as is generally supposed. After all, the often canvassed opinion of Dr. Johnson, is deserving of more respect than many critics will allow it, with some modification, that hymnology is not a subject on which the powers and charms of poetry can be most fitly displayed.

It is not to be inferred from these remarks, that his hymns are to be slighted. The point of attention, is, not that they lose by a comparison with many others; but that they fail when placed by the side of *his other poetical* works. Indeed it

must be admitted, that many of them manifest but little superiority over competitors springing from the common multitude, with which they are often associated.

The mental affliction under which this estimable man laboured for a number of years, often beclouded his religious views, and tinged with melancholy his susceptive heart. Some of Cowper's friendly annotators, have raised an apology from hence, for any defects observable in his hymns. But arguments drawn from that quarter are doubtful, if not fallacious. For in his other poetry, though despondency might envelope him like a dark cloud, and his hopes be buried in the dust, yet, his refulgent genius ascended, and with it his theme; his Address to his Mother's Picture may be cited as proof.

Cowper has many hymns on which we might expatiate with great pleasure:

> "O! for a closer walk with God,
> A pure and holy flame;
> A light that shines upon the road
> That leads me to the Lamb," &c.

strikes a tender, yet an arousing strain, that finds an echo in every Christian breast. His well known hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way," &c., presents a masterly defence of Divine providence, in an elevated tone of poetry, with great beauty, and force of illustration. It is true, the introduction of the flower in the fifth verse, as a

simile, though appropriate in some connexions, is here unsuited to the dignity of the theme, and the other figures with which it is employed. Besides, this verse is unfortunate, in having a harsh rhyme, and a broken figure, as—

> "His purposes will ripen *fast*,
> Unfolding every hour;
> The bud may have a *bitter taste*,
> But *sweet* will be the flower."

It is somewhat strange that such a discrepancy should have escaped the notice (as it must have done) of so acute and accomplished a writer.

The hymns of the Rev. John Newton, known as the "Olney Collections," under which title they at first appeared, made a considerable accession to the already increasing number of such compositions. They all breathe the spirit of ardent and active piety; and come fresh and warm, from a heart fired with love to God and man. The favourable impression produced by reading his hymns, will receive further lustre by an intimate knowledge of his character, as a Christian, and as a minister of the gospel.

A slight perusal will convince, however, that his poetical genius did not commensurately answer to the call of his desire, in this "labour of love." In the bulk of his hymns, a few are superior; presenting the force and beauty of the gospel in very respectable verse; and occasionally moving our sympathies towards the Saviour and his cause,

with great tenderness and affection. But these are but fitful visitations; as the best of his effusions rarely preserve throughout, the current of their interest, free from shallows or stagnation. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," &c., introduces an agreeable hymn. Yet in that hymn, the second verse is too much the echo of the first, to render its composition perfect. "Let worldly minds the world pursue," &c., shares our attention in a more masterly air; and better sustains the dignity, connection, and interest of its theme. But the majority of his hymns abound with naked matter-of-fact assertions, and the style at times is low; and generally too conversational, and minutely exegetical. If the *rhymes* and *numbers*, and other little *appendages* that bind the verse together were removed, the resemblance of poetry would be torn asunder, and it would discover much feeble, and some distorted prose. We may quote for illustration of this assertion one of his hymns, "A glance from heaven with sweet effect," &c. In this hymn there is an excessive torturing, and mutilation of metaphors, done in ill selected prosaic phraseology, while at the same time, the purpose of the writer is enveloped in much confusion. In almost every step the enlightened Christian reader takes through this hymn, commencing with the first line, he will find something to annoy his agreeable progress.

One of Newton's hymns has been at times roughly, and perhaps, unfairly handled. "'Tis

a point I long to know," &c. has been considered as abounding with inconsistencies, and as tending to bewilder the Christian inquirer, and creating a murky atmosphere of religious experience. It is true, it may be said in defence, that these are the remunerations of a young disciple, or of one who has wandered so far from the "Sun of righteousness," that his rays are but faintly perceived. But then, there are admissions made, which are the decided marks both of the wicked and Christian man's character, which go to produce either a nondescript in Christianity, or to neutralize the effect of the whole description.

We turn with great pleasure to a hymn of Doddridge, founded upon the same text of scripture; which exhibits the unmistakeable nature, clearness, and growing energy of Christian love, in very sweet and captivating verse. Thus we read:—

"Do not I love thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart, and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee.

Do not I love thee from my soul?
Then let me nothing love:
Dead be my heart to every joy,
When Jesus cannot move.

Is not thy name melodious still
To mine attentive ear?
Doth not each pulse with pleasure bound
My Saviour's voice to hear?

Hast thou a lamb in all thy flock
I would disdain to feed?
Hast thou a foe before whose face
I fear thy cause to plead?

Would not my heart pour forth its blood
In honour of thy name?
And challenge the cold hand of death
To damp the immortal flame?

Thou know'st I love thee, gracious Lord;
But O! I long to soar
Far from the sphere of mortal joys,
And learn to love thee more."

The exquisite tenderness, and unflinching purpose and energy of love; the familiar and pointed antithesis, and the compactness and easy flow of language, with which the fourth verse is richly charged, move the heart with very strong and delicious sensations.

The hymns of Bishop Heber have added value to the treasury of Christian psalmody; and the more modernized mould in which they are cast, has increased its currency. Of his contributions, the church of England have just cause to be proud. Though they be less daring in conception, and vigorous in expression, than are the efforts of some of our best hymn writers; they often excel them in the intensity and sweetness of feeling with which they are embued. The flow of the verse, and its adaptation to the theme, will give them a ready admittance, where Christian devotion is seeking the companionship of chaste and unassuming

poetry. Many of his hymns partake of a Missionary character, which most likely arose out of the position which he occupied in that section of the church of Christ, of which he was an ornament, both by his life and writings.

Reginald Heber was born at Malpas, Cheshire, 1783,—gained the English prize for his poem of "Palestine" in 1800, in Oxford University; travelled through Russia and Germany; for nineteen years attended to the regular duties of a clergyman, during which time he also employed his pen, and published among other things, some beautiful poems; in 1824 he went out as bishop to Calcutta, and in April the second, 1826, expired in a fit of appoplexy.

There are many other names, such as Merrick, Bishop Horn, Logan, Steel, Mrs. Barbauld, and others, who have called in the aid of the lyre, under the inspiration of religion, at different times, and with various success, whose hymns are deserving of notice. But there are two distinguished writers, whose hymns remain to be considered, which forbid a longer stay.

Dr. Watts may be considered in an important sense, the father of modern hymnology. By the publication of his "Psalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs," he raised the standard, and induced by his example, a correcter taste and a more elevated tone, in the psalmody of the church of Christ. Of the general character of his hymns,

therefore, it is impossible to speak but in terms of most sincere approbation.

That his hymns are all unexceptionable compositions, is an opinion which the warmest admirers of Dr. Watts will not maintain. It is sufficient praise that he has succeeded to an extent, in which all before him had failed. And in all cases where his muse flags, and the finish of poetic genius does not appear,—the great number of his hymns, the times and circumstances in which they were written,—present a very acceptable apology. The faults, or to employ a less offensive term, the defects of his hymns and psalms, are, certainly neither few nor trivial. Mr. Montgomery observes,* they are principally "prosaic phraseology, rhymes worse than none, and none where good ones are absolutely wanted, to raise the verse upon its feet, and make it go on, as the saying is, on all fours." The quality of thought is at times certainly very low, and as scanty in measure, tardily borne along by worn out figures, and feeble language; which not unfrequently expires with the reader's delight before the close of the hymn. We are sometimes sensible of a depressive appalling monotony, in the march and chime of the verse; which is most common where there is the least clearness of sense, and brilliancy of description.

These, however, are but the faint shadows in the

* Christian Psalmist.

picture, and affect not the distinctive features and proportions of his devotional poetry. The piety of Watts was active and reverential, and so catholic as to receive into its embrace all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and in return for which, no hymns have been so cordially received amongst all denominations of Christians. His information is various and extensive, meeting the cavils of sinners and the fears of saints, at every turn. His style is rather affectionate and persuasive, than bold and imperative. Even when dilating upon the most awful themes, there are felt under currents of tender emotion, which tell, his genius is better fitted for more pleasurable subjects.

His verse is often so free and flowing, and his numbers glide on so sweetly, that we are at times decoyed from noticing either the poverty or value of the treasure with which they are charged. Several striking specimens might be selected to illustrate this assertion; one of which, although it is not so apposite as some others, for the purpose, yet for another reason, we shall venture to notice here.

Few hymns have been greater favourites with the religious public than the following:—

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers;

Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours.

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dress'd in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordon roll'd between.

"But tim'rous mortals start and shrink,
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger shivering on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

"Oh! could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unbeclouded eyes!

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore."

The metaphors here employed to describe heaven, such as a "land," where there is "endless day," "everlasting spring," "never withering flowers," "sweet fields dressed in living green," where saints "reign" in an "immortalized" state, all of which are taken from nature, excepting the last,—make a very strong, yet an equally easy and agreeable impression upon the mind. It is true a critic in search of perfection, might observe some discrepancy of association in the metaphors, as in the relative position of the saints as "*reigning*," deriving peculiar "delight" from a renovated or new world, the charms of which are equally open

to both subject and king; or, whether "pleasure," which is the condition of being contemplated, can with propriety be personified, and brought into conflict with pain. But these defects, if defects they be, affect not the truth of the graphic sketch before us.

The great interest of the hymn collects round the feelings, purposes, and *ultimate decision* of the individual, who is placed in that position, which he can but once occupy—where the whole heart of existence seems to beat—and for him alone,—in the immediate prospect of death,—on the shore of that awful "sea," whose angry billows already dash their foam upon his feet

The temperature of Christian experience, in which "arise these gloomy doubts," at the view of death, is asserted by a class of Christians to be far more languid and dense than that which may be enjoyed by the brilliancy and force of gospel truth. St. Paul was confessedly more in the ascendant when he exclaimed, "I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand," &c.; and hence is inferred, that every Christian is called upon to possess such preparation for death, that, when the word to depart is given, he can break without hesitation from the ties of mortality.

The petition, "O! could I stand where Moses stood," involves a difficulty, if not a contradiction. Of course it must be understood either literally or figuratively. It is clear it cannot be understood

literally, as no one can see the heavenly land in the same sense as Moses beheld the land of Canaan. If understood figuratively, it seems to convey a reproof to the petitioner; for, as Moses saw by his bodily eye the land of Canaan, so the Christian sees by an eye of faith the heavenly land, with all its extent and beauty; and agreeably to the condition stipulated, he should be enabled to check every murmur, and brighten up every desponding thought. But it is properly urged, will the parallel warrant the attainment of such an elevation in Christian experience? If it cannot, then the prayer seems useless. If it can, then the misgivings, doubts, and clinging to earth, on the view of death, arise from the Christian not occupying that elevation on the mount of holiness, to which he is called.

Wesley has here been called in to shew the superiority of his views of Divine truth over those of Watts, especially in the animated hopes they inspire, in surveying death, when he says :—

> "The promised land from Pisgah's top
> I now exult to see;
> My hope is full (O! glorious hope)
> Of immortality," &c.

But to present this as a similar case to the hymn of Watts, shews great inattention to the connexion and immediate design of Wesley's composition. The hymn from which the above verse is taken, and that which immediately precedes it in the

Wesleyan collection, where the similitude of the promised land is much elaborated,—refers *not to heaven*, but to that high state of experience, termed by the Wesleyans, *Christian perfection*, or *sanctification*.

If, however, the Wesleyan view be a scriptural one, if followed out, it will bring the individual into the state prayed for in the hymn under consideration, and the argument will thereby be sustained.

It may further be remarked, that this *timidity* of religious feeling pervades many of his most animated effusions, in his efforts at once to grapple with the last enemy. But be this as it may, the hymn that has occasioned the above remarks, and many more of the same class, have great sympathy with the *tenor* of religious experience; and will ever be regarded by the Christian as agreeable companions in seasons of trouble, when panting for another and a better world.

The easy flow of his numbers, and his aptness to give instruction, generally provide Watts's hymns a welcome reception with those persons, who have but little relish for religion, and as little skill in its truths. And it is these qualifications, joined to a bland unostentatious disposition, that render his "Divine and Moral Songs," so permanently attractive to the rising generation.

Besides his "Psalms and Hymns," which were dedicated to the worship of God, many valuable

compositions, among his "Lyrical Poems," either in whole or in part, have been associated with them, and equally worthy of such distinction.

On the great compass and value of his hymns, it is as impracticable as it is unnecessary here further to point to specimens, either for proof or illustration. For in whatever point we enter into, or in whatever order we peruse the devotional effusions of this distinguished writer, we shall be sure to meet with gospel truth in the charms of poetry; which cannot fail to enlighten the mind, and mend the heart.

The character of Charles Wesley's hymns is widely different from that of Dr. Watts's. There is hardly any one point of view, where they are alike; while in many others, they are very dissimilar. In Dr. Watts, there is a deliberate attention to method, even when its power fails; but in Wesley, there is a comparative disregard of such precision; and relying on the resources of his genius, when his purpose is taken, he goes forth without hesitation to the execution of his design. In following his course, we often mark little inequalities and discrepancies, which produce a momentary pause; but they are soon forgotten, in the striking and unexpected views which open to our minds. Wesley is never insipid or tame; for though the topic may be common and threadbare; and he may be careless in the choice of expressions, and the construction of sentences, yet the brilliant turns of

thought, and vigour of his mind, ever give it an air of freshness and originality.

On funeral and mournful occasions, he falls far below Watts. There is not in him that calm tenderness, that minuteness, and that patient familiarity with suffering, as in Watts. He is less inclined to stay and soothe the wounded in the camp of Israel, than to plunge into the heart of the battle, and lead on the conquest, and exult with the ransomed of the Lord, when death shall be no more.

Unvarying confidence in his God, is the key-note of his triumphal songs, which often break unexpectedly upon the spirit in the face of the direst conflict, and leave no room for the sighs of doubt and fear. Thus:—

"I see an open door of hope,
Legions of sins in vain oppose;
Bold I with thee, my Lord, march up,
And triumph o'er a world of foes.

Gigantic lusts come forth to fight,
I mark, disdain, and all break through;
I tread them down in Jesus' might,
Through Jesus I can all things do."

And again:

"Raised by the breath of love Divine,
We urge our way with strength renew'd,
The church of the first-born to join,
We travel to the mount of God;
With joy upon our heads arise,
And meet our Captain in the skies."

The following hymn, shows, how a deep experimental acquaintance with Divine truth, can add force to poetic expression:—

"Not all the powers in hell can fright,
A soul that walks with Christ in light;
He walks, and cannot fall;
Clearly he sees, and wins his way,
Shining unto the perfect day,
And more than conquers all.

Light of the world! thy beams I bless!
On thee, bright Sun of Righteousness,
My faith hath fix'd its eye;
Guided by thee through all I go,
Nor fear the ruin spread below,
For thou art always nigh.

Ten thousand snares my path beset;
Yet will I, Lord, the work complete,
Which thou to me hast given;
Regardless of the pains I feel,
Close by the gates of death and hell,
I urge my way to heaven.

Still will I strive, and labour still
With humble zeal, to do thy will,
And trust in thy defence;
My soul into thy hands I give;
And if he can obtain thy leave,
Let Satan pluck me thence!"

Here are no cool calculations on coming events; no delays for coming qualifications, intimated by words that are often cantingly and evasively used; such as, "I would desire," "when," "if," "then," and other conditional expressions; but that which

should be done, *is* done. With him, decision and execution, involve the same act. But the power of his verse, has been attributed by some rather to the ardour of his poetic temperament, than to the influence of Divine truth; and he has thereby made himself responsible for the encouragement of religious fanaticism. It should be remembered that many of his hymns were written in the front of fierce persecution, and their truth and value have been pretty well tested by the success of the cause which called them forth; still, this fact will not prevent it from being left an open question.

The hymns of Charles Wesley, altogether, are numerous, and present a valuable exposition on the doctrines of Divine Revelation. They embody the facts and uses, of most of the occurrences and parables, both of the Old and New Testaments; and though with less formality, yet with greater effect, than do those of Dr. Watts. His "Wrestling Jacob," is, in this view, a singular production. It exquisitely works out its dramatic prototype, into the details of Christian experience, which every renewed heart feels to have been its own.

This effusion has obtained the warm commendation of critics on hymnology, from Dr. Watts, to Mr. Montgomery, with but few exceptions. But it has lately been discovered in a respectable periodical,* that such critics have been greatly

* Church of England Quarterly Review, for October, 1840.

mistaken; for it is there denounced, as having been "conceived in the very worst spirit of the conventicle." It seems strange to hear that composition which has been the means of strengthening the faith of thousands, when in penetential sorrow, and of renewing the joy on every subsequent perusal,—spoken of, either in whole or in parts, as, "vulgar," "irreligious," "presumptuous," and "blasphemous;" without a shadow of an argument, save what goes to prove the very reverse of the Reviewer's conclusions. Why, it is precisely the "vigour and colouring of the metaphor, in giving it real life," that, instead of making it "offensive," constitute its excellency for all the purposes of penitential aid.

It cannot, however, be pretended by his most enthusiastic admirers, that many of his hymns, some of which have been long before the public, as well as others which have occasionally appeared in latter years, are not exposed to criticism. Charles Wesley it is admitted was a ready versifier, and his love for the exercise was equal to his expedition. And he was not at all fastidious in the choice of a theme, a variety of which were fruitfully supplied by the incidents which were continually springing up in his extraordinary course. Many of these verses exhibit a happy combination of thought and feeling, wit and humour, and fixed a lasting stigma upon the vices and errors against which they were directed. But it may be presumed, that some of

his religious effusions, as well as those of a free and miscellaneous character, might as well have lain undisturbed in the manuscript; as, however they may support his fame as a man, a Christian, or a divine, they have added nothing to his character as a poet.

But that which gives his hymns the strongest recommendation to the devout Christian, is the *clearness, strength, richness,* and *depth* of religious enjoyment into which they conduct him. "Christian experience furnishes him with everlasting and inexhaustible themes; and it must be confessed, that he has celebrated them with an affluence of diction, and splendour of colouring, rarely surpassed. At the same time he has invested them with a power of truth, and endeared them both to the imaginations and affections, with a pathos which makes feeling conviction, and leaves the understanding little to do but to acquiesce in the decisions of the heart."

The collection of hymns now in use by the Wesleyan Methodists are not all by Charles Wesley. A good many are by his brother John, but how many no living testimony or record can now say with precision. But several on the attributes are doubtless his. His hymns are considered less terse and bold, but more correct and elegant than those of Charles. There is also one by his brother Samuel, "The morning flowers display their sweets," &c. Two by Oliver, "Lo he comes with clouds

descending," &c. "The God of Abraham praise," &c. One at least, by Toplady, "Rock of ages cleft for me," &c. Several by Dr. Watts, besides translations from the German, Spanish, and French.

For the preference which the hymns of Watts and Wesley respectively receive from the different sections of the Christian Church, several causes may be assigned. Among the rest it may be stated that the independents of the present day, connecting themselves with many of the sentiments of the non-conformists, and sympathizing with them in their sufferings, naturally look with complacency on the productions of Dr. Watts. Besides, when his psalms and hymns made their appearance, being vastly superior to anything of the kind published before, they were soon deservedly welcomed into most dissenting congregations, and were so used for years, before Wesley's hymns swelled to anything like the size of a rival. Having thus gained a comparative permanency, descending from parent to children in the same sanctuary, allowing none to supersede, and few to assist them, it is not to be wondered at that they should be regarded with great esteem by the dissenters of the present day. Certainly, in the lapse of years, several important collections have been introduced into the different dissenting bodies; but considering the many interests, both spiritual and secular, concerned in their use, it will be long before any col-

lection of hymns, however superior, will be allowed to take the place of those of Dr. Watts.

The same tenor of remark may be made, with but little abatement, to shew how the Methodists aid their choice of the hymns of Wesley. It is almost impossible for a Methodist, acquainted with the history of his people: the persecutions, perseverance, and peaceable victories of their founder and his coadjutors; the progress and consolidation of their cause, signally led on by the hand of Providence, and which is still extending its operations, and strengthening its resources, beyond the hopes of its friends or the fears of its enemies; we say it is difficult to imagine a Methodist so unmoved by connexional sympathy as not to feel a peculiar attachment to, and often to take wing with, the "bard of Methodism!"

We cannot better conclude our remarks on these two eminent men, and the work generally, than by quoting the eloquent language of the late Rev. Richard Watson.* "To Dr. Watts and Mr. Charles Wesley the largest share of gratitude is due, in modern times, from the Churches of Christ, for that rich supply of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs in which the assemblies of the pious make melody unto the Lord, in strains which 'angels might delight to hear.' No others are to be named with these sweet singers of the spiritual Israel;

* Life of Rev. J. Wesley, p. 322.

and it is probable that, through the medium of their voice chiefly, will the devotion of our churches be poured forth till time shall be no more. No other poets ever attained such elevation as this. They honoured God in their gifts, and God has honoured them to be the mouths of his people to him, in their solemn assemblies, in their private devotions, and in the struggles of death itself."

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